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RURAL AMERICA TODAY

Its Schools and Community Life

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

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THE BAKER & TAYLOR COMPANY
NEW YORK

THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON



Farm Security Administration. Photographer Marion Post

A FRIENDLY TEACHER BRIGHTENS A POOR SCHOOLROOM

RURAL AMERICA TODAY

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By

GEORGE A. WORKS

and

SIMON O. LESSER



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, U S A.

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PREFACE

THIS book is an attempt to describe, in its major aspects, the nation's number-one educational problem—rural education. The authors have tried, first, to sketch the gross inequalities which are depriving not a minority but a full half of the nation's children of that equality of educational opportunity which should be their birthright as Americans. Second, they have attempted to indicate what rural people themselves, the states, and the nation can do and are doing about the situation. So far as possible they have emphasized what is being done in the belief that the actual solutions which certain communities have worked out to their problems are more likely to be sound and to stimulate action in other communities than would any theoretical and untested recommendations that might be made. By their very choice of examples, however, the authors have indicated what they regard as desirable practice, and they have not hesitated to make supplementary recommendations from time to time.

Throughout this entire report "rural education" has been interpreted in the broadest possible terms; and, for the reader who equates education with the schoolroom experience of children, *Rural America Today—Its Schools and Community Institutions* is an altogether inadequate title. The schools are, of course, the very foundation of our system of public education, and a number of chapters in this report are devoted to an account of deficiencies and promising developments in America's rural schools. But it is the authors' conviction that, particularly in rural areas, one cannot fully understand the conditions, problems, and functions of the schools without taking account of community conditions and that the community itself exerts educational influences of the utmost importance. The writers, therefore, have regarded it as an essential part of their task to discuss many phases of rural community life which are closely related to education and to deal with the economic and demographic factors which are responsible for some of the most difficult educational prob-

lems rural people face. In the belief that education is a lifelong process, they have also reported upon existing educational facilities in rural areas for older youth and adults. A chapter has also been devoted to the special problems of rural Negroes. The broad definition of education which has guided the writers has added to the difficulty of their task, but they do not feel that they could have omitted any topic and fulfilled their objective of giving an adequate account of rural educational conditions, problems, and developments.

This volume was the outgrowth of a suggestion made by certain officers of the General Education Board, which financed its writing and the study upon which it is based. It might be thought of as a report to the General Education Board, but the authors have not had that as the primary objective. Rather, they have had in view reaching an individual whom they have designated as the General Reader.

The General Reader, however, is a vague and, unfortunately, in most instances a rather elusive person; so, to be on the safe side, the authors have imagined a number of different groups of General Readers, at least some of whom they hope will find this book helpful. They have wished to reach many people in cities—such people as educators and legislators, of course, but also public-spirited and informed laymen. Urban people, as chapter xvi of this report in particular attempts to demonstrate, can make valuable contributions to the solution of rural educational problems and have an important stake in their solution. The writers have also addressed themselves to many readers in rural America—to laymen interested in obtaining an over-all picture of existing educational and social conditions in rural America and of recent developments of significance.

For the reader in city or country interested in securing such a bird's-eye view, the writers hope that this volume will prove useful. Its very scope, however, imposes certain limitations. The writers have felt it necessary, for example, to confine themselves largely to such issues as have particular relevance to the field of rural education. As an instance, in the chapter on vocational education the writers have not mentioned the desirability of having a unified administration for general and vocational education in the belief that such a point belongs rather in a treatise on educational administra-

tion and has no special applicability to the rural situation. Such general points as were necessary to the fabric of the argument have been treated in *Rural America Today*, but the writers have been forced to concentrate their attention upon those issues which are of particular importance in the rural scene. Space considerations have also compelled the authors to omit a great deal of illuminating historical material, although such material has furnished an invaluable background for their discussion of current issues and conditions.

It has been impossible for the writers to uncover every promising development in each aspect of rural education and community life. Nor has it always been possible for them to be certain that illustrations they have used are "the best" that might be cited. Because they have had to rely for the most part on secondhand accounts in securing information about the programs of various communities and schools, they may have described certain programs too glowingly. They realize, too, that they have been unable to include enough illustrative material to demonstrate adequately the variations in conditions in different regions and different types of communities. In a work of this character such limitations are inevitable and relatively inconsequential. If the programs described are the *type* which have merit, it does not greatly matter if they are surpassed in some places or executed imperfectly or will not meet the requirements of every rural community.

In a number of chapters the illustrative material giving the account of promising developments in alert rural communities and schools may so outweigh the necessarily briefer statements of the deficiencies which are widespread as to leave in the mind of the reader the impression that, everything considered, all is well. All is not well. The description of successful programs distinctly merits a place in this report. These programs show what can be accomplished under existing conditions by resourceful communities and schools. It is to be hoped that they will stimulate similar undertakings in other places. But it is essential that the reader not mistake the best for the average or forget that, for each good program which is reported, scores of examples might be cited of schools and communities which

are unable to make adequate provision for their essential social and educational needs.

In the nation as a whole rural people are unable to provide the educational opportunities for their children and the social facilities for themselves which are essential for satisfactory living and the perpetuation of our democratic society. They need financial and other types of assistance from the states and the nation, and it is to the interest of the states and the nation to provide such assistance. So serious in their import are the existing deficiencies in rural social and educational facilities that America cannot safely permit them to continue. A fuller realization of the dangers inherent in their continuance is being brought to us as we enter the world-struggle for the defense of the basic concepts which underlie our democratic society.

GEORGE A. WORKS
SIMON O. LESSER

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
December 1941

AUTHORS' ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

LITERALLY hundreds of persons have contributed to the preparation of *Rural America Today—Its Schools and Community Life*. In its preparation several approaches were made to the problems involved. Some field work was done, especially by the senior author. However, in comparison with the magnitude of the problem, a relatively small amount of the material used was gathered first hand. During the trips made in connection with the field work, conferences were held with many workers connected with rural social and educational institutions. Experience from this source was drawn upon heavily. Extensive use was made of printed sources treating of rural problems. Materials of a helpful nature were obtained from state departments of education, land-grant colleges, teachers colleges, the United States Office of Education, the United States Department of Agriculture, and reports issued by other state and national organizations as well as by local groups. These sources were supplemented by extensive correspondence and in some instances by personal interviews.

A very large proportion of the persons communicated with have been exceedingly generous in making suggestions growing out of their study and experience and in describing existing rural social needs and the efforts of particular communities, schools, agencies, or states to meet them. Such persons have supplied the writers with data and literature, including a great deal of unpublished material, and in many cases have referred them to others in position to supply more detailed information about particular programs. Wherever the writers have made direct use of information furnished by contributors, they have acknowledged their indebtedness in the "Authorities for the Facts" following each chapter. It has been possible to use only a small fraction of the material submitted, however, although all of it has contributed to the background of this study and to whatever soundness the generalizations in *Rural America Today* possess. The writers wish there were some adequate way of expressing apprecia-

tion to the hundreds of individuals who have supplied material which has been helpful in the preparation of their report.

The authors are indebted to the General Education Board for making the study possible, and to the several officers of the Board, especially Albert R. Mann, for numerous suggestions made while the study was in progress. They wish to acknowledge also their indebtedness to the Advisory Committee which has assisted them, especially at the inception of the study. The Committee's advice was of particular value in determining the scope of the study and its emphasis upon social and economic factors. The following individuals were members of the Advisory Committee:

- GORDON W. BLACKWELL, Research Associate, Institute for Research in Social Science, University of North Carolina
 EDMUND DE S. BRUNNER, Professor of Rural Sociology, Teachers College, Columbia University
 C. HORACE HAMILTON, Head of the Department of Rural Sociology, North Carolina State College of Agriculture and Engineering, University of North Carolina
 J. H. KOLB, Professor of Rural Sociology, College of Agriculture, University of Wisconsin
 T. W. SCHULTZ, Professor of Economics and Head of the Department of Economics and Sociology, Iowa State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts
 T. LYNN SMITH, Professor and Head of the Department of Sociology, Louisiana State University

A number of individuals in a position to speak with authority on certain aspects of rural life and education have been invited to prepare special reports which have been of invaluable assistance in the preparation of this volume. The names of these persons and the titles of their reports are listed below:

- | | |
|--|---|
| NEWTON EDWARDS, Professor of Education, University of Chicago | "Population Trends and Problems of Rural Education" |
| T. LYNN SMITH, Professor and Head of the Department of Sociology, Louisiana State University | "The Role of the Community in American Rural Life" |
| R. M. STEWART, Professor of Rural Education, Cornell University | "Placement at Work and Rural Education" |

- | | |
|--|--|
| F. W. LATHROP, Specialist in Agricultural Education, United States Office of Education | "The Effects of Vocational Agriculture upon Rural Life" |
| LEON CARNOVSKY, Associate Professor of Library Science, University of Chicago | "Rural Library Service" |
| GRACE A. BROWNING, Assistant Professor of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago | "Rural Public Welfare and Education" |
| HORACE MANN BOND, President, Fort Valley State College, Fort Valley, Georgia | "Progress in the Rural Education of Negroes and in the Training of Teachers for Rural Negro Schools and the More Serious Barriers to Continued Progress" |
| CHARLES S. JOHNSON, Director, Department of Social Science, Fisk University | "A Note on the Statement Prepared by Dr. H. M. Bond" |
| FRED G. WALE, Director for Rural Education, Julius Rosenwald Fund | "Notes on the Educational Program of the Resettlement Administration and Its Successor, the Farm Security Administration" |

The writers wish to acknowledge their indebtedness to M. M. Chambers for assistance in the preparation of chapters xii and xiv; to Alvin Zander, of the University of Michigan, for help with chapter xv; to Mary-Elizabeth Grenander for extremely valuable assistance in checking references and in the preparation of the "Authorities for the Facts"; to Virginia E. Smith for a careful reading of the completed manuscript and for the preparation of the Index; and to the individuals listed below for critically reading certain chapters:

- | | |
|--|---|
| I. DOLLARS AND CHILDREN | Newton Edwards, Professor of Education, University of Chicago |
| VI. VOCATIONAL PREPARATION IN RURAL SCHOOLS | Marie White, Federal Agent, Home Economics Education, United States Office of Education |
| VIII. LIBRARY SERVICE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES AND SCHOOLS | Leon Carnovsky, Associate Professor of Library Science, University of Chicago |

- | | |
|---|--|
| IX. THE SCHOOLS AND RURAL HEALTH | Arthur R. Turner, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, University of Chicago |
| X. THE SCHOOLS AND RURAL RECREATION | Ella Gardner, Recreation Specialist, United States Department of Agriculture |
| XI. THE SCHOOLS AND RURAL SOCIAL WELFARE | Grace A. Browning, Assistant Professor of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago |
| XIII. ADULT EDUCATION IN RURAL AREAS | M. L. Wilson, Director of Extension Work, United States Department of Agriculture
Cyril O. Houle, Instructor in Education, University of Chicago |
| XIV. EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL FACILITIES FOR RURAL NEGROES | Charles S. Johnson, Director, Department of Social Science, Fisk University |
| XV. LOCAL PLANNING: WHAT RURAL COMMUNITIES ARE DOING TO IMPROVE THEIR OWN SITUATION | Bushrod W. Allin, Head, Division of State and Local Planning, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, United States Department of Agriculture
Thomas Cooper, Dean and Director, College of Agriculture and Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Kentucky
Alvin Zander, Extramural Services, University of Michigan |

The authors also wish to thank the following publishers and periodicals for permission to quote from their publications: the American Academy of Political and Social Science; the American Council on Education; the American Library Association; the Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University; Editorial Publications, Inc. (the *New Republic*); Harper and Brothers; the McGraw-Hill Book Company; the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company; the *Michigan Alumnus Quarterly Review*; the National Education Association of the United States and the Department of Elementary School Principals of the National Education Association, the Educational Policies Commission, and the Department of Rural

Education of the National Education Association; the National Vocational Guidance Association, Inc.; the New York State Commission for the Revision of the Tax Laws; Phi Delta Kappa; the Regents' Inquiry into the Character and Cost of Public Education in the State of New York; the Science Press; Survey Associates, Inc.; the *American Scholar* (Phi Beta Kappa quarterly); the University of Chicago Press; Time, Inc.; John Wiley and Sons, Inc., and Messrs. Dwight Sanderson and Robert A. Polson. The source of each specific quotation is indicated in the "Authorities for the Facts."

The Farm Security Administration has supplied the photographs which appear in *Rural America Today*.

Grateful as they are for the assistance they have received from many quarters, the authors must assume full responsibility for the contents of *Rural America Today*. They have had to consider the many suggestions made to them, and the materials supplied by contributors, in the light of their own understanding of the problems of rural life and education and of the purposes of this particular study. They have not hesitated to modify or reject, as well as to accept, ideas; and they take complete responsibility for even those sections of *Rural America Today* which are based in part upon the reports of contributors.

GEORGE A. WORKS
SIMON O. LESSER

AUTHORITIES FOR THE FACTS

THE "Authorities for the Facts" are intended to take the place of the more usual footnotes: to acknowledge the source of quotations, tables, figures, data, and ideas taken from other publications and to facilitate reference to those publications by readers interested in making a fuller investigation of a particular topic.

The authors have also indicated the sources upon which they have placed most reliance in the preparation of each chapter of *Rural America Today—Its Schools and Community Institutions*. No attempt has been made to prepare a complete bibliography or to indicate the "best" books in a particular field. The authors have simply attempted to indicate the books which they found most useful for their particular purposes—those whose arguments and data contributed most significantly to the development of this report.

Full bibliographical data about a publication are given only the first time it is mentioned. Thereafter it is referred to by author and title only.

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CHAPTER I

DOLLARS AND CHILDREN

MANY children—few dollars. This is the crux of the rural educational problem. Today so few children are being born in America's cities that their population would decline were it not for arrivals from outside. Meanwhile, many more children than are needed to maintain the population are being born in rural areas. But rural people are poor—poor in wealth, poor in income. An economically disadvantaged section of the population is confronted with the task of rearing and educating a disproportionate share of tomorrow's Americans, including many whose productive years will be spent in the cities. This, in essence, is the rural educational problem. It is also, obviously, a national problem.

THE BASIC POPULATION FACTS

In 1940 over fifty-seven million Americans lived in rural areas, considering both open country and centers of less than twenty-five hundred. This is nearly 44 per cent of the nation's population. Twenty-eight of the states were more largely rural than urban. More than half of all the children under sixteen years of age lived in rural areas.

Birth rates in city and country.—The birth rate in rural areas is far higher than in cities. There is, in fact, a persistent relationship between place and fertility: fertility increases as the size of the community grows smaller. The differences are marked. Farm women have more than twice as many children as women in the largest cities. Table 1 presents the situation quite clearly.

Within the farm population itself there are sharp variations in fertility. Birth rates are far higher in the southern Appalachians, the Cotton Belt of the old Southeast, the western cotton belt, the cutover lands of the Great Lakes states, and in parts of the Great Plains than in New England, the Middle West, or the Pacific states. In Connecticut fertility among native white farm women is just suf-

ficient for family replacement. In North Carolina, West Virginia, and Utah it is high enough to double the farm population in thirty years, assuming no emigration. Somewhat more than two-thirds of the natural increase in the farm population, that is, the excess of births over deaths, is taking place in eight southern states—Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, and Texas. North Carolina alone in the five-year period 1930-34 had an excess of births over deaths in its farm population

TABLE 1
ESTIMATED REPRODUCTION RATES PER GENERATION
FOR THE WHITE POPULATION IN URBAN AND
RURAL AREAS, 1930

Urban or Rural Area	Reproduction Rate*
United States: urban and rural	1 09
Urban and rural nonfarm	0 97
Urban: total	0 87
500,000 and over	0 78
250,000-500,000	0 76
100,000-250,000	0 87
25,000-100,000	0 89
2,500-25,000	1 00
Rural: total	1 47
Nonfarm	1 33
Farm	1 62

* A reproduction rate of 1 means that the population group is reproducing itself at such a rate that its numbers remain stationary, a rate lower than 1 means that the group is not reproducing itself, while a rate greater than 1 means that the group will increase in numbers

greater than that of New England, the Middle Atlantic states, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan combined.

Within states, too, there are marked variations in fertility. Among farmers living in marginal and submarginal land and in the South among farm tenants, birth rates are unusually high.

The burden of child care in city and country.—These differentials in fertility result, naturally, in marked imbalances in the distribution of the burden of child care. The educational load, as measured by the ratio of children to adults twenty to sixty-four years of age, grows progressively heavier as the size of the community diminishes. In cities of one hundred thousand or more the economically produc-

tive adult population has relatively few children to take care of; in the cities of the Far West the load is particularly light. In the rural-nonfarm population, that is, in villages and towns of twenty-five hundred or less, children of school age are considerably more numerous. It is in the rural-farm group, however, that the ratio of children to adults reaches its peak. In every region of the country the burden carried by economically productive farm people is at least half again as great as that carried by urban adults of the same region.

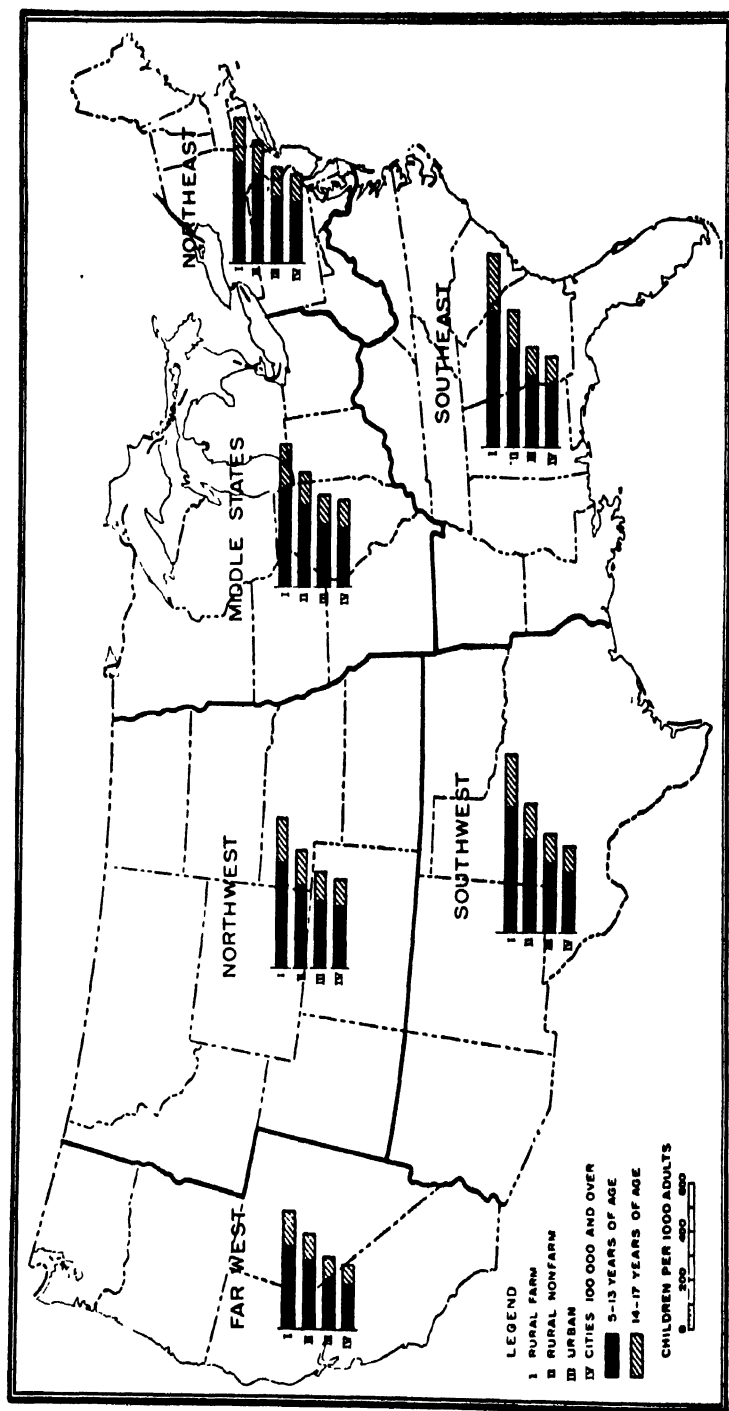
TABLE 2

CHILD POPULATION RELATIVE TO ADULT POPULATION IN RURAL-FARM, RURAL-NONFARM, AND URBAN COMMUNITIES AND IN CITIES OF 100,000 AND OVER, BY REGIONS

REGION	NO. OF CHILDREN 5-17 YEARS OF AGE PER 1,000 ADULTS 20-64 YEARS OF AGE			
	Rural- Farm	Rural- Nonfarm	Total Urban	Cities of 100,000
United States	675	495	377	348
Northeast	590	498	389	364
Middle States	578	460	368	346
Northwest	612	479	398	364
Southeast	791	558	408	363
Southwest	720	519	396	350
Far West	491	385	298	266

In the Southeast it is nearly twice as great. There, as Table 2 shows, each thousand farm adults in the age group twenty to sixty-four supports 791 children of school age, while each thousand city adults supports only 408. In the Far West each thousand city adults has only 298 children to rear.

Within the farm population itself the educational load is very unevenly distributed. In the farm population of Nevada there are only 432 children five to seventeen years of age for each thousand adults. In South Carolina there are 936. Within states there are also sharp variations. In Michigan, for example, the number of children five to seventeen per thousand adults twenty to sixty-four is 390 in the cities and 609 among the rural-farm population. The corresponding figures in Pennsylvania are 431 and 642. There are similar varia-



Prepared in Office of the National Resources Committee

FIG. 1.—Number of children five to thirteen and fourteen to seventeen years of age per 1,000 adults in rural-farm, rural-nonfarm, and urban communities and in cities of 100,000 population and over, by regions, 1930.

tions between counties in the same state, depending in large part upon whether they are predominantly rural or urban. In Alabama the range in the ratio of children to adults in different counties is from 235 to 457. In Arkansas it is from 219 to 433. If individual school districts were compared, the differences would be even more marked.

Variations in the distribution of youth.—An examination of the distribution of youth fifteen to twenty-four years of age reveals corresponding though less striking differentials. Although youth were extremely mobile during the twenties, migration was not sufficient to counterbalance the extremely high birth rate of the farm population and establish a rural-urban balance. In the Southeast and Southwest the ratio of youth to adults was far higher in the country and in the villages than in the cities. In every region there was considerable variation in the farm and urban burden. However, migration did almost cancel the difference in the urban and village birth rates. There was little difference, particularly in the Northeast and the Middle States, in the ratio of youth to adults in villages and cities. In fact, in some industrial states—Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Illinois, and Michigan—it was higher in the cities. Evidently the villages have no great drawing or holding power for youth. Yet they support relatively more youth than the cities, and the rural-farm population carries the heaviest burden of all.

Table 3 gives the ratio of youth to adults in the farm, rural-non-farm, and urban population by regions. Figure 1 shows that, when both children and youth are considered, in every region the farm population carries the heaviest burden and the rural-nonfarm population a heavier burden than the cities.

Census figures showing the 1940 ratio of school-age population to producing-age population have recently become available. Although the rural ratio dropped somewhat more than the urban ratio during the thirties, in 1940 each one hundred rural adults aged twenty to sixty-four still had to support forty-two children in the seven- to seventeen-year age group—half again as many as people in cities.

Variations in distribution of persons sixty-five and over.—On the assumption that persons of sixty-five and over have ordinarily passed their productive peak and are likely to be at least partially depend-

ent upon others, they are generally separated in statistical tabulations from the twenty-to-sixty-four age group. In addition to having relatively more children than cities, rural America has a disproportionate share of these dependent persons sixty-five and over. In every region but one the ratio of persons over sixty-five to those aged twenty to sixty-four is higher in both country and villages than in cities (see Table 4).

There is only one significant difference in the distribution of children and dependent persons over sixty-five, and that concerns the

TABLE 3
RATIOS OF YOUTH TO ADULTS, BY REGIONS, FOR
URBAN, RURAL-FARM, AND RURAL-NONFARM
COMMUNITIES, 1930

REGION	RATIOS OF YOUTH 15-24 TO ADULTS 25-64		
	Urban	Rural- Farm	Rural- Nonfarm
Northeast	352	410	365
Middle States	345	408	345
Northwest	366	462	385
Southeast	413	584	487
Southwest	409	562	446
Far West	292	354	315

two rural groups: whereas the rural-farm population supports relatively more children and youth, the villages, where many people like to spend their declining years, support relatively more old people. The burden in both villages and open country, however, is heavier than in the cities.

In the case of children, youth, and aged, the responsibility of the people in the most productive age span is heavier in the country than in the city.

THE BASIC ECONOMIC FACTS

Not only has the rural population a greater number of dependents to support but it has fewer dollars with which to do the job. Instead of children and dollars being distributed in about the same proportions, in general there is an inverse relationship. The rural popula-

tion as a whole has less wealth and more children than that of the cities, and within the rural population the areas with the greatest number of children are in general the poorest.

To understand the difficulties which rural people face in providing their children with decent educational facilities, it is necessary to have some knowledge of their economic situation—of their poverty, which is marked when they are considered as a group, and of the strength of the forces which are operating to make and keep them poor.

TABLE 4
DIFFERENCES IN OLD AGE DEPENDENCY IN URBAN
AND RURAL AREAS, BY REGIONS, 1930

REGION	NO. OF DEPENDENTS AGED 65 AND OVER PER 1,000 ADULTS 20-64 YEARS OF AGE, BY TYPE OF COMMUNITY		
	Urban	Rural- Nonfarm	Rural- Farm
United States	85	124	108
Northeast	84	127	158
Middle States	87	174	127
Northwest	106	140	86
Southeast	70	82	95
Southwest	65	85	83
Far West	101	110	121

Supply and demand get out of step.—Science and mechanical power began to affect American agriculture at precisely the time when millions of fertile new acres, many of which did not have to be cleared, became available for cultivation. The result was an enormous expansion in agricultural production, which more than doubled each quarter-century until 1890. At the same time, however, population was also increasing rapidly, not only in America but also in Europe, which took American grain, meat, and cotton in repayment for money lent this country for its industrial development. By and large, demand kept pace with agriculture's increased ability to produce.

In more recent years, however, demand has ceased to expand and in some areas has contracted. The rate of population growth has decreased. As a consequence of an increasing proportion of the popu-

lation being absorbed in indoor occupations, the per capita consumption of certain farm products, notably cereal foodstuffs, has declined. The depression further curtailed domestic demand.

While World War I temporarily expanded European demand for our products, in the end it left the situation worse than before. Apart from the sharp readjustment required by the termination of the abnormal war demand, the war left America a creditor nation, which made it more difficult for Europe to buy from us. A reduction in tariffs might have eased the situation somewhat, but a high tariff policy prevailed. Amid the poverty and jingoism which characterized post-war readjustment in Europe, there arose movements for national self-sufficiency. One consequence has been a sharp decrease in export demand.

Some effects of technology.—As early as 1850 power machinery began to be used in farming, but the full effect of the impact of technology on agriculture was not clearly evident until demand for farm products ceased to expand. It is estimated, however, that output per farm worker has increased about 150 per cent since 1870. It increased 19 per cent in the decade ending in 1920, another 18 per cent in the twenties, and is still going up. C. Horace Hamilton estimates that in one year—between January 1, 1937, and January 1, 1938—the tractor displaced more than twenty thousand families from cotton farms in Texas alone. It must be remembered, too, that not only mechanization but such things as shifts to more productive animals per unit of feed consumed, improvements in the breeding of plants and animals, and control of disease and insect pests have all enhanced the productivity of agriculture. It is frightening, in view of our present inability to profit from the energy released by scientific farming practices, to realize that there is still much room for increased efficiency. Only moderate advances in technology would be required, it has been estimated, to enable half of our farms to supply the volume of agricultural products now being bought and sold.

The impact of technology upon farming has many implications which cannot be examined here. It is essential, however, to see the effect it has had—in conjunction, of course, with supply-demand imbalances and many other forces which cannot be considered in this brief analysis—upon the economic return from farming and the creation of a “surplus” farm population.

When improvements in the efficiency of agriculture outrun increases in demand, a smaller percentage of the nation's population can do its farming. In 1870, 53 per cent of all gainfully employed persons in the United States were engaged in agriculture. In 1930 only 21 per cent were so engaged. However, two things must be remembered in connection with this steady but gradual shift. Until 1910 this decrease in the *percentage* of persons engaged in farming meant no decrease in the actual *number* so engaged; the agricultural population was increasing, although at a slow rate as compared with the rapidly booming cities. Furthermore, until, roughly, the advent of the depression, there were economic opportunities elsewhere for those sons and daughters of farmers who could not be absorbed in agriculture at home. While the country was still expanding, they could "go West," either to engage in farming there or to find opportunities in the towns. There were openings in the manufacturing and mechanical industries, in trade and transportation, in mining, and in the service fields. The cities continued to expand after the westward migration ceased. From 1910 to 1930 migration to cities exceeded the natural increase in the farm population, which declined by 1,900,000.

After 1926, however, the cityward drift slowed up, and in the depths of the depression there was no net movement from farm to city. Since 1934 the movement from farms has again exceeded the movement to farms, but by an amount insufficient to balance the natural increase in the farm population. As a result—in the face of a contracted demand for agricultural products and improved production practices—the farm population has increased to the highest point in the nation's history. This has meant greater pressure on the land, upon the yields from farming, and upon the value of farm property.

In general, the pressure has been most intense in those regions already characterized by meager physical resources—by relatively high population density, small farms, and poor soil. While between 1930 and 1935 the number of farms increased more than 20 per cent in hundreds of counties, the increase exceeded 40 per cent in some of the poorest farming areas in the United States. Much of the subdividing went on in the southern Appalachians, the cutover lands in the Great Lakes region, and the Southwest. These were precisely the

areas already characterized by numerous small, low-yielding farms which barely sustained the families dependent upon them.

The income of farm people.—In the relatively prosperous year of 1929, 49 per cent of all the farms in the United States produced less than one thousand dollars' worth of products, including those consumed by the farm family. Twenty-eight per cent of all farms, nearly 1,800,000 in number, produced less than six hundred dollars' worth. Fifteen per cent, nearly one million in number, produced less than four hundred dollars' worth.

Two-thirds of the farms that produced less than one thousand dollars' worth of products were located in the South. While every part of the country without exception has a number of poor farms, and the upper Great Lakes region and the Southwest have a great many, the situation of the Southeast is especially critical. Forty per cent of the farms in this region produce less than six hundred dollars' worth of products annually. There are over nine hundred thousand of these low-yielding farms, more than in all the rest of the nation. Approximately 7,700,000 persons live on them. It must be remembered, too, that the dollar value of products represents gross farm income. Operating expenses, rents, and interest charges must be deducted to arrive at the net income upon which these people are actually dependent. While some of them may have sources of supplementary income, only 11 per cent of these farms, it is estimated, are part-time enterprises.

In 1929 the average per capita income of America's farm population was less than one-third that of the nonfarm population—\$273 as compared with \$908. In the Southeast the average per capita income of farm people was only \$183. Farm incomes approached nonfarm in only one region—the Far West. They nowhere equaled them.

When income is compared on a family basis, the disadvantageous position of the farm population is again apparent. The average income of nonrelief farm families in 1935-36 was estimated at \$1,259. The comparable figure for city families was \$2,064. The economy of many villages is closely geared to agriculture, so it is not surprising that the earnings of village families were also low—\$1,607. But the urban-farm disparity was most marked. Nonrelief families living in the four cities of 1,500,000 population and over (New York, Chicago,

Philadelphia, and Detroit), although they constituted only 11 per cent of the nation's families, received roughly as much of the aggregate national income as the farm population, which included 25 per cent of the families.

Low as are these figures, it must be remembered that they are averages and that large numbers of individual farmers earned still less. Carl C. Taylor, of the United States Department of Agricul-



Farm Security Administration Photographer Rothstein

ERODED LAND—A FREQUENT CAUSE OF RURAL POVERTY

ture, estimates that there are a half-million farmers living on land so poor that they cannot make a living from it no matter how hard they try. While meager returns from farming are general in the South, the income of tenants is markedly lower than that of operating owners—only one-third as high according to one North Carolina study. Earnings of farm laborers, of whom there are nearly five million, range very low the nation over. Because the defense program has depleted the farm labor supply, wages have jumped in recent months; in April, 1941, the average wage of United States farm hands was

\$31.56 per month and board. This, however, was an eleven-year peak. It must be remembered, too, that because of the seasonal nature of much farm employment annual earnings are not likely to be as satisfactory as monthly figures might suggest. In the South, prior to the defense boom, the net cash earnings of hired workers, whether share-croppers or wage hands, only occasionally exceeded \$100 per year. Even when goods for home use and perquisites are added, the figure rarely rose above \$150.

Finally, account must be taken of the large number of farm people who have no paid employment, are partially unemployed, or are dependent on emergency work relief. Words like "unemployment" and "relief" sound anomalous in conjunction with farming, for we tend to think of farming as self-sufficient, as it basically was in the past. But today the majority of farms are commercialized and largely dependent upon the success, yield, and price of one or two cash crops. Owners and, in particular, tenants of small cash-crop farms were poorly equipped to weather a long agricultural depression. Those who lost their farms might try to get jobs as farm laborers, but they merely swelled an already existing surplus, created by decreased demand for farm products, mechanization, and the exhaustion of the soil. The result of the depression of the thirties and the competition for the existing jobs was an unremitting pressure on wages which reduced them in many cases to zero; there was an enormous expansion in the number of those, particularly in the younger age groups, who worked without pay on their families' farms. In 1935, it is estimated, there were more than four and a quarter million unpaid family farm laborers. Many in the farm population lacked even subsistence employment and were forced to apply for relief. By and large these were mature men with wives, children, or aged persons dependent on them. While the subject of rural relief will be discussed in chapter xi, it cannot be disregarded in this brief sketch of the economic situation of farm people. The 1937 unemployment census found that among men living on farms 266,000 were dependent upon emergency public works employment. Five hundred and seventy-six thousand more men were partially unemployed, and 705,000 totally unemployed. In 1935, the peak year, it is estimated that two and a half million rural families (from villages as well as farms) were dependent on some form of relief.

Emphasis in the preceding discussion has been on the low income of farm people because they are the most disadvantageously situated group and because the prosperity of a large proportion of the rural-nonfarm population is closely linked to agriculture. It should be kept in mind at all times, however, that, as compared with urban dwellers, rural-nonfarm people are also poor and that they too have relatively large numbers of dependents. As chapter xi will make clear, the impact of the depression upon them was at least as severe as upon the farm population.

The increase in tenancy and mortgage debt.—Not only the present economic situation of farm people but the trend of development must be considered in appraising their ability to support an adequate educational program. That trend, as the nature of the forces affecting agriculture would cause us to expect, is downward. For fifty years the farmers in most parts of the United States have been losing the ownership of the land. This is evident from two indices: the increasing proportion of farm land operated by tenants and the rising ratio of mortgage debt to the value of farm property. Increase in tenancy does not necessarily spell decline in landownership by farmers. In some sections of the country there is a tendency for farmowners to rent adjacent land in order to secure a more efficient operating unit. Thus not all tenants are landless men. By and large, however, the growth in tenancy is an indication that the ownership of farms is passing from the hands of those who operate them.

The proportion of farm land leased to tenants or sharecroppers has increased steadily for half a century. In 1900, 31 per cent of the land was operated by persons who did not own it. By 1935 the figure had risen to 45 per cent. In over 1,100 counties concentrated in the corn and cotton belts, over half of the farm land was leased. In the Carolinas, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Oklahoma between 60 and 70 per cent of all farmers were tenants. In certain areas and under certain circumstances tenancy may be more advantageous than ownership. In the past it has often been a step toward ownership, but this is decreasingly true as mechanization increases the size of farms, the value of operating equipment, and the amount of money it takes to get started in farming on one's own. In general, at least in the South, tenancy for most people spells low income, a low plane of living, and no high hopes for the future.

"Mortgage debt, which deprives the farm operator in part of the ownership of the land, but generally leaves him in control, is constituting an increasing proportion of the value of all farm real estate." Such debt, which amounted to three and a half billion dollars in 1910, climbed to eight billion dollars in 1935. This was less in dollars than the peak indebtedness of the late twenties. But it represented a new high in relation to the value of farm property, which between 1920 and 1935 suffered a precipitous decline. In 1910 the ratio of debt to the value of farms operated by owners was 27 per cent; in 1920, 40 per cent; in 1935, 50 per cent.

It is necessary to add the value of farm real estate operated by tenants and the amount of mortgage debt on land operated by owners and to compare the total with the value of all farm property to ascertain the net equity of farm operators in the land they work. In 1880 this equity was about 62 per cent of the value of all farm real estate. It declined about four points a decade thereafter, in prosperity or depression, until in 1935 farm operators had only 39 per cent of the equity—really owned less than two-fifths of the land they worked (see Fig. 2).

Movement of wealth from farm to city.—Both farm tenancy and mortgage debt involve a movement of wealth from farm to city. It is estimated that rents paid by farmers to nonfarmers amounted to over eight billion dollars in 1937. Despite low interest rates they paid about four billion dollars' interest on mortgage debt the same year, some of which, of course, went to the cities.

Even so essential and everyday an activity as buying and selling does not usually work out so advantageously for the farmer as for the city dweller; and the amount of buying and selling has expanded enormously as farming has become increasingly commercialized and functions once taken care of on the farm have been lost or transferred to industry. Exchange of goods between country and city would benefit both equally if the prices of farm and industrial products fluctuated together. But, relative to the 1909-14 level, the prices of things farmers buy had increased 20-25 per cent by 1938 while the prices of the things they sell had decreased 5 per cent. In late 1941, relative to the 1909-14 level, "parity," or balance, between the price of agricultural products and the price of industrial products

was finally achieved, largely because of the war-inspired and federally encouraged rise in the former and federally imposed ceilings on the price of important items in the latter group. However, the relatively favorable current situation of the farmer should not cause us to forget the disadvantage under which he has labored for many years or the comparative ease with which the prices of agricultural products

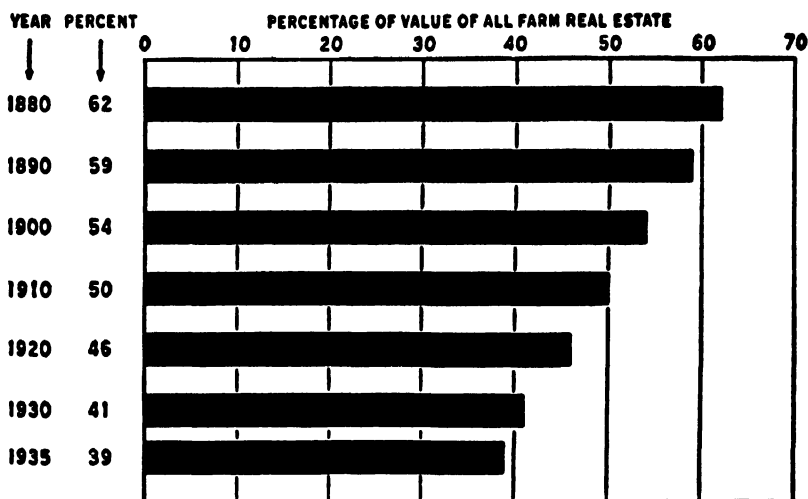


FIG. 2 —Estimated equity of farm operators in farm real estate they operated, 1880-1935. In 1880 the equity of farm operators in farm real estate (i.e., the proportion remaining after the value of farms operated by tenants and the mortgage debt on farms operated by owners has been subtracted from the value of all farms) was over 62 per cent. Each decade thereafter, in periods of prosperity as well as of depression, the percentage declined about 4 points, until in 1935 it was only 39 per cent. An increasing proportion of farm operators has been sharing the income from the land with landlords or mortgage holders. But the percentage of farms mortgaged declined between 1930 and 1935, doubtless owing in large measure to foreclosures.

usually crumble in the face of deflationary influences. From 1929 to the spring of 1933 agricultural commodities declined 63 per cent in price. Typical industrial prices declined only 15-33 per cent during the same period.

By far the greatest transfer of wealth from farm to city occurs in connection with the migration of farm youth. O. E. Baker's analysis of the economic effects of the cityward drift of rural youth is famous:

It is strange that so few people have realized the magnitude of the contribution which the farming people have made to the productivity and prosperity of

the cities, suburbs, and villages in the feeding, clothing, and education of the young people who leave the farms. . . .

If it costs \$2,000 (at pre-depression prices) to rear and educate the average child on American farms to the age of 15, when he may be assumed to be self-supporting—and \$150 a year does not seem an excessive estimate of the cost of food, clothing, medical service, education, and all the incidental expenses with \$50 a year allowed for the labor of the child from 10 to 15 years of age—then the 6,300,000 net migration from the farms during the decade 1920-29 represented a contribution of about \$12,600,000,000. This contribution was about equal to the value of the cotton crops during those years.

Nor is this all. When the farmer and his wife grow old and die, the estate is usually divided among the children. During the decade 1920-29, about one-fifth of the farmers and their wives died, and their estates were distributed among the children. Nearly one-half of the children had moved to town, and those children who remained on the farm had to mortgage the farm in many cases to pay the brothers and sisters who lived in the cities their share of the estate. A rough estimate indicates that between \$2,000,000,000 and \$3,000,000,000 was transferred from the farms to the cities and villages during the decade 1920-29 incident to the settlement of the estates. Generally the child who remains on the farm, or some stranger who buys it, has to mortgage the farm to pay the heirs in the cities their share of the estate. We cannot separate interest on debt arising from this cause from that arising from other causes, but the Bureau of Agricultural Economics has estimated the total interest on mortgage debt paid by farmers to non-farmers during that decade at \$5,000,000,000. Sometimes all the children have gone to the cities, and on the death of the parents they rent the farm, or sell it to someone who rents it. Rental payments made by farmers to non-farmers during the period 1920-29, including those arising from other causes than migration, amounted to about \$10,000,000,000.

It is not intended to draw up a balance sheet of rural-urban contributions, but it appears almost certain that the movement of wealth from the cities to the farms, namely, income of the farmers from non-farm investments, government pensions, state aid to schools in poor farming areas, probably a portion of the cost of improved roads, expenditures of city people on country estates, etc., is small in comparison with this drift of wealth from the farms to the cities. Taking all these items into consideration, it appears probable that the net movement of wealth from farms exceeded \$20,000,000,000 during the decade 1920-29 and probably did not exceed \$30,000,000,000. If \$25,000,000,000 be taken as a very rough estimate, it appears that the equivalent of about one-fifth of the gross value of farm products or about two-fifths of the net value after cash cost of production and rental payments are subtracted, was transferred from the farms during the pre-depression decade in excess of that received in return.

Keeping in mind this disadvantageous—and deteriorating—economic situation, let us return again to the task which confronts the farmer in educating his children.

4.44 TO 1

The full extent of the educational burden of the farm population is apparent only when both their resources and the number of their children are considered. In 1929 farmers received 9 per cent of the national income but shouldered the burden for the care and education of 31 per cent of the nation's children five to seventeen years of age. Figure 3 shows how dollars and children are distributed as between the farm and nonfarm population in the various regions.

It will be seen that in every region except the Far West the percentage of the nation's children in the farm population far exceeds the percentage of the national income received by the farmers of that region. In the Northeast and Northwest the percentage of the nation's children in the farm population is more than twice as high as the percentage of national income received by the farmers of the region. In the Middle States and Southwest the ratio is more than three to one. In the Southeast farmers must care for 13.42 per cent of the nation's children on 2.21 per cent of the national income. In contrast, the nonfarm population of the Northeast, with only twice as many children, has 42 per cent of the national income.

Another way of comparing the relative ability of the farm and nonfarm population to support an educational program is to compute the amount of income available per child to be educated. This does not provide a wholly satisfactory yardstick because of variations in the cost of living, especially as between city and country. Contrary to the impression of many urban dwellers, however, in the present era of commercial farming, when farm people buy many of the things they formerly produced themselves, these differences are not very great. In any case, the most liberal allowance for them would not seriously reduce the tremendous discrepancies which exist in income and the burden of child care. In 1930, the nation over, the nonfarm population had more than four times as much money available per child as the farm population. For every dollar of income available per child in farm areas there was \$4.44 available in nonfarm areas. In only sixteen states was the income per nonfarm child less than twice as great as the income per farm child. In seventeen states it was four to six times as great. So great is the imbalance that even where income per child to be educated in the nonfarm population is lowest—in the Southeast—it is still higher than the income

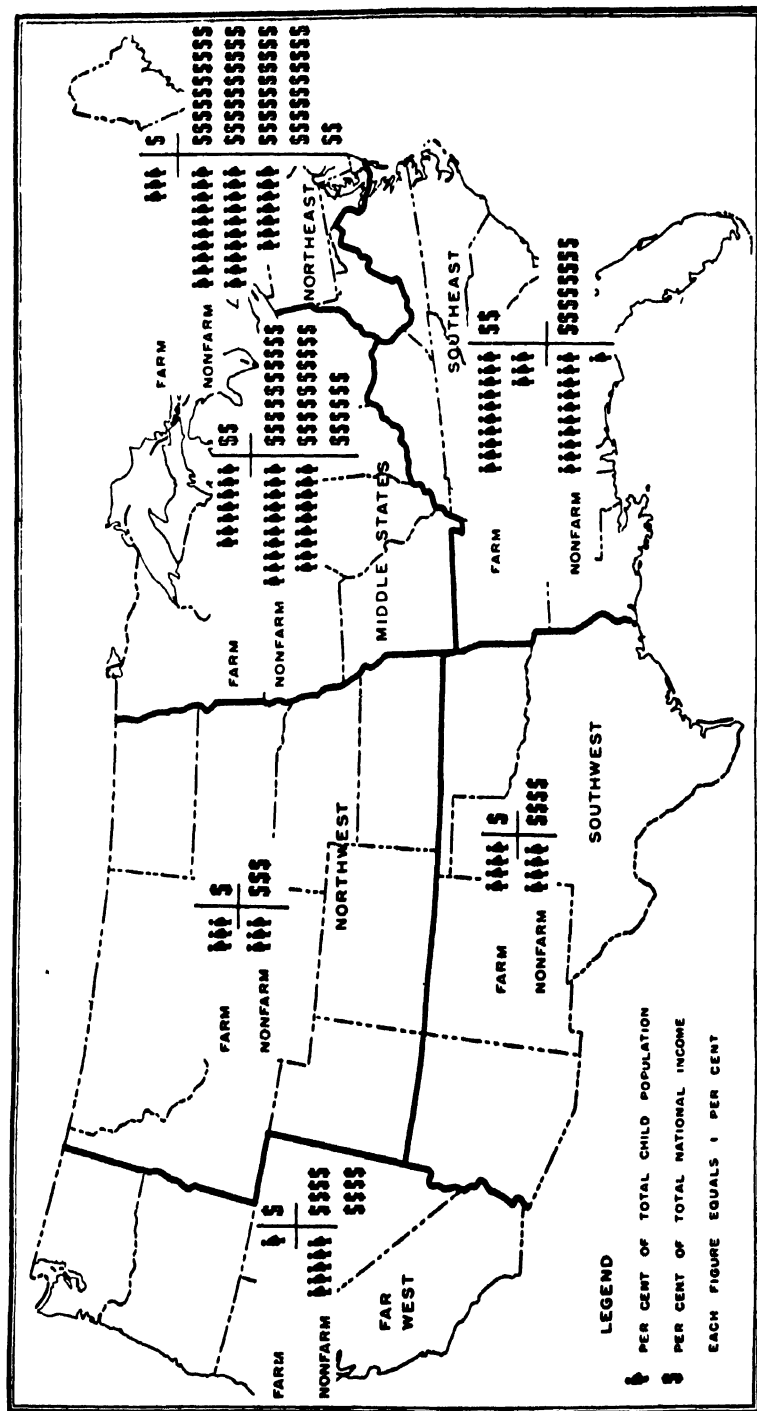


FIG. 3.—Regional percentages of the child population and of the nation's income, farm and nonfarm communities

per child in the farm population in every region except the Far West. Table 5 shows the extent of the imbalance in each region.

The difference in the ability of the farm and nonfarm groups to support education is evident not only in large geographic areas but

TABLE 5
INCOME PER FARM AND NONFARM CHILD, BY REGIONS, 1929

Region	Income in Millions of Dollars	No of Children 5-17 Years of Age	Income per Child (in Dollars)	Dollars for Each Non-farm Child per Dollar for Each Farm Child
United States	\$91,385	31,571,322	\$2,895	\$4.44
Nonfarm	83,125	21,903,653	3,795	
Farm	8,260	9,667,669	854	
Northeast	39,231	9,361,454	4,191	3 38
Nonfarm	38,100	8,508,630	4,478	
Farm	1,131	852,824	1,326	
Middle States	25,933	8,224,247	3,153	4 46
Nonfarm	23,996	6,048,233	3,907	
Farm	1,937	2,176,014	890	
Northwest	4,197	1,974,378	2,126	2.39
Nonfarm	3,118	1,080,700	2,885	
Farm	1,079	893,678	1,207	
Southeast	9,149	7,714,093	1,186	4 33
Nonfarm	7,138	3,473,983	2,055	
Farm	2,011	4,240,110	474	
Southwest	4,768	2,567,712	1,857	3.10
Nonfarm	3,711	1,362,924	2,723	
Farm	1,057	1,204,788	877	
Far West	8,107	1,729,438	4,688	1.42
Nonfarm	7,062	1,429,183	4,941	
Farm	1,047	300,255	3,480	

in individual counties and school districts. Five predominantly rural Alabama counties, which a standard plane-of-living index shows to be extremely poor (with an average score of 5 as compared to the national figure of 100) have an average of 426 children per thousand adults. The six Alabama counties with the highest planes of living—all of them containing larger towns—have a plane-of-living index of

46 and only 291 children per thousand adults. In many states, the Advisory Committee on Education estimates, the most able local school units could provide one hundred dollars or more per child for every one dollar provided by the least able units.

The effects and implications of the economic inability of the rural people to support an adequate educational program will be examined in detail in this report. The situation is by no means a hopeless one. There are many things which rural people can do, and are doing, to overcome the disadvantages under which they labor. There are clear-cut indications for state and federal action.

The basic economic and population facts about rural education, and the dangers inherent in them, should, however, be faced. The existing situation is the result neither of a temporary emergency nor of tendencies which have spent their force but of fundamental imbalances which may persist for decades. Without positive action a typical vicious circle may develop. Farm population, as has been seen, is tending to accumulate in areas of limited economic opportunity. The disproportionate burden of child care and the pressure of population tend to impoverish the people further.

If an adequate and realistic education does not equip the oncoming generation to cope with, to alter, or to escape from this situation, the operation of the forces at work can result only in further deterioration. Education is essential to release the productive capacity of rural children and to enable them to solve their difficult social and economic problems.

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States by Age, Sex, and Color (preliminary): 1940 (February 20, 1941); census release P-3, No. 14, *Population—Total, Urban, and Rural Population of Counties: 1940—The United States* (June 23, 1941); and "Youth Employment and Unemployment," Vol. I, a preliminary draft of a staff report prepared for the American Youth Commission (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1941), p. 127 (mimeographed).

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on *Total and Partial Unemployment*, Vol. IV: *Census of Partial Employment, Unemployment and Occupations: 1937* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1938), p. 129.

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CHAPTER II

EDUCATIONAL CONDITIONS AND PROBLEMS
IN RURAL AREAS

THE disadvantages faced by rural people in supporting an adequate educational program for their children are mirrored in existing rural school facilities and conditions. Before surveying these conditions, however, it may be well to remind ourselves of the number of children affected by them. Even well-informed persons often grossly underestimate the number of children attending rural schools.

The scope of rural education.—Over thirteen million pupils—roughly 50 per cent of all those in the United States—attend schools in rural areas. They are instructed by more than 482,000 elementary- and secondary-school teachers, 54 per cent of all those in the nation. Two hundred and eleven thousand school buildings, 88 per cent of the total number, are in rural America.

As these figures suggest, the average rural school is still a small institution. Though the number of one-teacher schools has been reduced by more than a third in the last twenty years, there are still more than 130,000 of them. They enrol approximately 2,800,000 pupils. The one-teacher school, W. H. Gaumnitz, of the United States Office of Education, writes, "must be regarded as an important part of our school system, and it promises to remain such for decades to come." In addition, there are over 23,000 two-teacher schools, enrolling roughly 1,300,000 pupils. Thus more than four million children, about 40 per cent of all those attending rural elementary schools, are in one- and two-teacher schools. Another 22 per cent are in schools with three to six teachers; the remainder are in schools with seven teachers or more.

There are over 17,600 rural high schools, enrolling more than 2,200,000 pupils. Despite some reduction in the percentage of small high schools in recent years, the typical rural high school, too, is still a small institution. In 1934 one school out of five enrolled fewer than

fifty pupils and had only two or three teachers. Almost half of the rural high schools enrolled fewer than a hundred pupils and had no more than five teachers.

The national figures do not reveal the extent to which rural schools predominate in various states and regions. In the fifteen south-eastern and southwestern states over 92 per cent of the public school buildings are in rural areas. These schools enrol 72 per cent of the pupils in the regions and employ 73 per cent of the teachers. In these states and in many others throughout the country, education is largely a rural enterprise. In the nation as a whole rural schools deserve the close attention of educators on the basis of their numerical importance alone.

RURAL SCHOOL CONDITIONS AND FACILITIES

Every commonly employed statistical measure suggests that the quality of educational service provided by rural schools, considered as a group, falls far below national norms. School facilities and conditions clearly reveal the difficulties faced by the rural population in trying to educate a disproportionately large share of the nation's children on a disproportionately small share of the national income. Weaknesses abound despite a more-than-average effort to support an adequate educational program and despite some assistance, nearly everywhere, from state school funds. Even though rural people generally spend more than city people on education in relation to their means, they are unable to provide their children with the preparation they need to cope with their environment and to compete on equal terms with city-bred children.

The inferior nature of the educational facilities and program in rural areas is suggested by comparative expenditure figures. While such figures furnish only indirect and imperfect yardsticks, in general there is a high correlation between the amount of money spent for education and the quality of service provided. The Regents' Inquiry into the Character and Cost of Public Education in New York found that this was particularly true in that state as long as the annual per-pupil expenditures are below ninety-five dollars. While the particular point up to which increased expenditures are almost certain to purchase an improved grade of educational service varies among the

states, in every state it undoubtedly far exceeds the average amount actually spent in rural schools.

Although the nation's rural schools enrolled 50 per cent of all pupils in 1935-36, only 37 per cent of the funds for the support of public elementary and secondary schools were expended upon them. The average expenditure per pupil in average daily attendance in rural schools was \$67.40, in contrast to an urban expenditure of \$108.25. Although it is now being lessened somewhat, an even greater discrepancy obtains in the value of school buildings and equipment in country and city. Rural school buildings constitute 88 per cent of the total number but represent only 30 per cent of total plant value. Approximately \$2,000,000,000, or \$154 per pupil, is invested in rural schools, in comparison with \$4,700,000,000, or \$355 per pupil, in urban schools.

Low expenditure levels affect every aspect of rural education—the caliber of the teachers, the adequacy of physical equipment, the length of the school term—the very character and effectiveness of the educational service itself.

The background and status of rural teachers.—As education changes to meet the demands of a more complex society, the responsibilities of teachers become increasingly heavy and diverse. This is particularly true under the difficult conditions which exist in many rural schools. It is of the utmost importance for these schools to attract teachers with the proper qualifications and training. Yet their salary scales are extremely low even if comparisons are confined to the educational field and no reference is made to other, better-paying, professions. In 1935-36 the average salary of rural teachers, supervisors, and principals was \$827—nearly a thousand dollars less than the average salary of the comparable group in urban schools. Nearly half of the teachers with the exacting responsibility of teaching in one-room schools earned less than \$500, and nearly half of the teachers in two-room schools earned less than \$600.

Such salaries do not ordinarily attract well-equipped, well-trained persons, and the qualifications of rural teachers in general, and of teachers in smaller schools in particular, are below an acceptable standard. Despite an influx of well-trained teachers between 1930 and 1935, in the latter year more than 22 per cent of the white teach-

ers in one-room schools had no more than four years of education beyond the elementary grades. Six years of education beyond grade school is now widely regarded as the minimum amount of educational preparation needed for teaching, and there is a growing sentiment, already reflected in the requirements of several states, in favor of an eight-year minimum. However, in 1935 only 43 per cent of the teachers in one-room schools and 66 per cent of the teachers in two-room schools had had six years or more of education beyond grade school. As Table 6 indicates, the preparation of teachers in small rural schools lags far behind that of city teachers.

Rural schools also have more than their share of inexperienced teachers and a rapid turnover, which is in large part the result of teachers' efforts to better their position. In 1930 nearly a fourth of

TABLE 6
TEACHERS HAVING TWO YEARS OR MORE OF COLLEGE EDUCATION

	Per Cent
Teachers in one- and two-teacher schools in open country	38
Teachers in three or more teacher schools in open country	72
Teachers in villages of less than 2,500 population	79
Teachers in cities of 2,500-9,999 population	88
Teachers in cities of 10,000-99,000 population	90
Teachers in cities of 100,000 or more population	91

the teachers in one-room schools and 14 per cent of those in two-room schools had less than one year's previous teaching experience. Teachers in small towns keep their positions on the average only a little more than three years. Teachers in one-room schools change jobs even more frequently. This shifting-about is particularly unfortunate in view of the unusually close relationship between school and community in rural areas. In many ways it restricts teachers' effectiveness.

Rural teachers frequently lack incentive or means to make up deficiencies in their formal preparation and to keep abreast of developments in their field. Half buy no books on teaching; 15 per cent take no professional magazines. Many rural teachers recognize the undesirability of this situation but can do little to remedy it, particularly if they have families or dependents. "I want to take a course in summer school to bring myself up to date with respect to

teaching methods in my field," writes one rural teacher, typical of the eleven thousand who reported their financial condition to the National Education Association, "but for the last eight years I have been unable to take even a correspondence course because I could not spare the small sum required."

Rural school buildings and equipment.—The disparity in the status of urban and rural teachers has its counterpart in the conspicuous



Farm Security Administration Photographer Marion Post

A ONE-ROOM SCHOOL—TYPICAL OF THOUSANDS OF RURAL SCHOOLS IN AMERICA

differences in school plant and equipment between city and country. The low average value of school property per pupil enrolled in rural schools is reflected in deficiencies in physical facilities. A study conducted co-operatively by the United States Office of Education and ten participating states in 1938 showed that "large numbers of children are housed in poorly constructed, unsafe, and generally inadequate buildings, often lacking even rudimentary provisions for hygiene and sanitation. This is particularly true of the large number of one- and two-room schools." More than half the white children in

Oklahoma and 39 per cent of those in Arkansas were attending schools which, the study indicated, should be abandoned. North Carolina rated 715 of her 1,704 school buildings for white children as "bad." One-room schools are so notably inadequate the nation over that the percentage of them in a state is sometimes used as an index of the quality of its educational facilities.

Henry L. Fulmer graphically describes the equipment in one not untypical group of rural schools in South Carolina:

In the elementary schools of the study area it is usual to find old and badly used double desks. The lighting is poor, and on cloudy days many of the children experience great difficulty in seeing. All rooms are heated with wood-burning stoves, and on cold days the children spend too much of their time grouped around them. The open water bucket, filled from a well or nearby spring, and the common drinking cup are always found. The blackboards, made of fibrous-like substances, are nailed to the walls of the class-rooms.

As this description suggests, many rural schools not only are deficient so far as general construction and sanitary facilities are concerned but have poor provisions for lighting, heating, and ventilation and are inadequately equipped. Playgrounds and playground equipment in most cases are equally inadequate. The typical small rural school is uncomfortable, inconvenient, and unattractive and almost completely lacking in those architectural arrangements which can make a positive contribution to learning.

Enrolment and attendance in rural schools.—Rural children spend fewer days in school than city children. School terms average nearly a month shorter in the country. "Nearly all the school terms in the United States of less than nine months and all of less than eight months are in rural areas." Furthermore, rural school attendance, in 1935-36, averaged 83 per cent of enrolment as compared with 86 per cent in city schools. It is estimated that there are over eight hundred thousand American children between the ages of seven and thirteen, nearly all of them living in the poorest rural areas, who are not going to school at all.

While enrolment in rural high schools more than doubled between 1926 and 1935, in the latter year only 60.5 per cent of rural children fourteen to seventeen years of age were going to school as compared with 67.9 per cent of urban children. Table 7 reveals at a glance the

difference in the amount of schooling received by children in city and country.

Another index to the relatively low status of rural education is the disproportionate amount of grade-repeating which exists, especially in the primary grades. In the typical rural school there is a marked concentration of children in the first few grades and, in general, a considerable amount of retardation. When a child has to repeat a grade, it adds to the cost of educating him and in many cases gives him a sense of failure, which the subsequent year of work in the company of children younger than himself may serve to reinforce. Re-

TABLE 7

ENROLMENT AND ATTENDANCE IN RURAL AND URBAN SCHOOLS

	Rural	Urban
Number of pupils attending school daily per each 100 enrolled, 1935-36	83 0	86 1
Number of days in school terms, 1935-36	163 9	181 6
Average number of days attended by each pupil enrolled, 1935-36	131 6	156 3
Percentage of all children 5-17 years of age en- rolled in school, 1935-36	82 5%	90 9%
Percentage of children 5-17 years of age enrolled in high school, 1933-34	60 5%	67 9%

tarded children are likely to be irregular in attendance and tend to drop out of school as soon as it is legally permissible.

Variations in rural educational conditions.—While rural educational facilities and conditions are poor in general by urban standards, in various places—characterized usually by poverty and large numbers of children—conditions are deplorable, even in comparison with the rural norm. The comparisons which have been made between educational conditions in city and country have been based largely on averages. However, there are wide variations in educational conditions in rural areas.

In 1935-36 three states, Alabama, Mississippi, and Arkansas, all predominantly rural, spent less than \$30 per pupil in average daily attendance—less than half the rural average. In various school districts within these states expenditures were, of course, lower still. The pay of rural teachers varies correspondingly. While the average

salary of rural teachers, supervisors, and principals in 1935-36 was \$827, in nineteen states it was less than \$750. In Georgia and Arkansas it was less than \$500. In the smaller schools there are still many white teachers who receive salaries of \$200 and \$300 a year. Within individual states the most marked variations exist. In Alabama, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Oregon, Texas, and Washington salaries of teachers in one-room schools ranged, in 1935, from \$200 to more than \$1,200. There are wide variations, too, in the qualifications and training of rural teachers.

School facilities in certain rural areas are almost unimaginably bad. In Mississippi, in 1934, 1,506 buildings—a fourth of the total used for school purposes—were not publicly owned. They included churches, tenant-cabins, farm cottages, and stores. In 1,681 buildings used for school purposes there was no water supply; more than a thousand buildings had no toilet facilities. In South Carolina, in 1937, 777 schools lacked drinking water and 720 were without toilet facilities. It was estimated in 1935 that 2,700,000 children were attending school regularly in buildings that were "inadequate, unsafe, obsolete, or temporary." Some improvement has been witnessed since that time, largely because of the help that federal agencies have furnished with school construction and repair, but by no means have all of the unsuitable buildings been improved or eliminated.

Although statistics of average expenditures in open-country schools are not available, educational facilities in the country are in general markedly inferior to those in villages. Furthermore, country youth are much less likely to have high schools readily available. In Washington County, Arkansas, the population of which is three-fourths rural, a careful study was made of high-school enrolment over a ten-year period from "central" school districts, which have a village or town center and give four years of high-school instruction, and from open-country districts. During the decade only 15 per cent of the youth of high-school age from the open-country districts attended high school, as compared with 60 per cent of the youth from central districts. The pronounced difference in the quality of educational service in the elementary schools of the two types of school districts was one of the factors clearly responsible for the disparity. The central districts, with almost twice as much revenue per pupil as the open-country districts, were able to provide markedly superior

elementary schools. School terms averaged eight months as compared with less than seven months in the open-country districts. Teachers were better paid and better trained and tended to keep their positions longer.

As will be developed more fully in chapter xiv, there is a sharp contrast between the educational facilities for white rural children and those for Negroes in most of the states maintaining separate school systems. In ten southern states for which data are available, expenditures in 1935-36 averaged \$37.87 per white pupil enrolled and only \$13.09 per Negro pupil. While figures are for urban as well as for rural schools, in rural areas the levels are probably lower still and the difference in the support of white and Negro schools at least as marked.

Variations in ability to utilize facilities.—Because of differences in race, location, and their families' economic status, there are variations, too, in the ability of rural children to take advantage of the educational facilities which exist. The American Youth Commission survey of Maryland youth found that the occupation of the father is the most important single factor in determining how long children can remain in school. There are many studies which show that children from rural homes in the lower economic brackets start school later, attend less regularly, make slower progress, and drop out sooner than children from more prosperous homes. In Virginia children from well-to-do families have almost ten times as good a chance as have children from marginal families of reaching second-year high school. The children of tenant farmers labor under particularly serious disadvantages. In addition to the handicaps incidental to their parents' economic position, their schooling is likely to be frequently interrupted because of moving. In the spring of 1935 more than a third of the nation's tenants had occupied their farms a year or less. According to one study, the children of tenants who move lose several weeks between leaving one school and entering another. They face, in addition, the necessity of adjusting themselves to a new community where their families are not yet established or accepted. The children of migrant farm laborers are still more severely handicapped in obtaining an education. Their situation will be discussed in chapter xvi.

Distance from school, road conditions, and availability of trans-

portation markedly affect the rural child's prospects of securing schooling. In the Washington County, Arkansas, study already referred to, it was found that while open-country youth in general are less likely to go on to high school than youth in central school districts, there are also sharp variations among open-country districts in the percentage of their youth enrolled in secondary schools. In the ten-year period covered by the study no youth from twenty-five open-country districts in Washington County had attended high school. Attendance from other open-country districts ranged up to 30 per cent. The accessibility of the high school was a definite factor in this variation.

High school enrollment tended to vary with road distance to the high school. Higher percentages of pupils from districts in the more level agricultural areas and districts located on improved roads attended high school. Pupils from districts providing transportation attended high school more frequently than pupils from other districts of similar location or wealth but without transportation. The increase in high school enrollment varied with distance. Changes in accessibility, whether through road improvement or establishment of transportation, were generally followed by increased enrollment in high school from rural districts.

Equality of educational opportunity does not exist for rural children generally, and within the rural group there are marked differences dependent upon race, geography, and economic circumstances. Even within individual states and counties educational facilities often vary greatly. The establishment of free schools has not achieved its purpose: equality of opportunity remains a fugitive ideal. Nor can one complacently dismiss the inequalities which exist as the result of certain schools' exceeding a satisfactory minimum standard. It is clear that millions of rural children are receiving a totally inadequate preparation for their future responsibilities as men and women, as workers, and as citizens in a democratic society. Particularly in view of the fact that these children will tomorrow populate the cities as well as the country, it is not too much to say that this is a situation which endangers the national welfare.

SOME SPECIAL PROBLEMS IN RURAL EDUCATION

While the ends of education, considered broadly, are the same in country and city, the means to their attainment must be adapted to the environment. Conditions of life in rural areas, notably the low

population density, give rise to distinctive problems with regard to controlling costs, making the school program effective, and reaching special groups of children and adults.

The cost of education in rural areas.—The fact that much of the rural population is spread thin over a wide area increases the cost of providing educational facilities. If schools serve only a small area, there are likely to be only a few pupils for each teacher and, consequently, high per-pupil costs; if schools serving wider areas are established, transportation must be furnished for students who do not live within walking distance. In general, contrary to the common impression, it is expensive to provide education in rural areas.

The very small schools are most expensive of all. A careful study made by W. H. Gaumnitz, of the United States Office of Education, shows that "almost invariably the per-pupil costs are extremely high in the smaller schools; that these costs fall rapidly as one passes from the smallest to the next larger schools." Even though teachers with low qualifications and little experience are commonly employed in very small schools, the annual cost per pupil averages between \$250 and \$300 in elementary schools which enrol between one to five pupils and between \$150 and \$200 in elementary schools which enrol from six to ten pupils. Such schools are three to six times as expensive as larger schools, although they furnish a lower quality of educational service. It is estimated that there are more than thirty thousand children going to schools which enrol fewer than five pupils and more than a million going to schools which enrol from six to ten pupils. If these schools could be abandoned and the children educated in nearby schools at an average cost of \$75 per pupil, the total saving would exceed fifty million dollars per year. Even if per-pupil costs were considerably higher, because of transportation expense, there would still be a substantial saving; and the lower expenditures would purchase a greater measure of educational opportunity.

Particularly when school districts are poorly laid out, the cost of transportation can mount to burdensome heights. A survey of the schools of the state of Washington revealed that, whereas city schools spend nearly all of their revenues on instruction and plant operation, some districts in rural areas are forced to spend over half

of their revenues on transportation. Instances were discovered where pupils are transported past near-by schools to more remote destinations and where several busses enter the same area to transport pupils to different schools.

Difficulties in providing an adequate program.—Rural schools face special difficulties in providing an adequate, stimulating educational program. Because their pupils come from homes and communities where cultural resources are often limited, it is particularly important that they offer abundant opportunities for exploration and self-expression. But the lack of resources and exceptionally difficult teaching conditions tend to keep programs thin, stereotyped, and inflexible. The typical one-room school has from fifteen to twenty-three pupils, ranging in age from five to fifteen and distributed in six to eight grades with one to three children in each grade. Confronted with such a class, the average poorly equipped teacher bases her instruction on textbooks and drill in the three *R*'s. Her teaching tends to be routinized and dull. There is little consideration of the needs and interests of the group, much less of individual children. Such subjects as art, music, health, and elementary science may be almost completely neglected.

The small school in which one teacher hears the recitations of several grades is unable to devote as much time as larger schools to the subjects it does offer. An Oklahoma study showed that large schools spend three to eleven times as much time on a subject as one-teacher schools. In the first four grades of the larger schools, for example, six minutes were devoted to reading for every one minute devoted to it in the first four grades of the smaller schools. Three-fourths of the school time of children in one-teacher schools, it was found, is spent unassisted and unsupervised. A similar comparison was made in Ohio between the one-teacher schools of a county and the larger rural schools of the state. The latter, the study revealed, devote thirty to forty minutes to each class under direct teacher supervision; in contrast, the small schools devote an average of eleven minutes.

It must be remembered that there are still more than 130,000 one-room schools and that in two-room and some larger schools teachers must handle classes made up of children from two to four different grades.

Texts and teaching aids are often unsuitable.—In view of the dependence of many rural teachers upon textbooks, it is particularly unfortunate that so many texts are unsuitable for rural use. Ideally, there should be a great deal of teaching material which has been prepared with the needs of rural schools and rural children especially in mind. Much of the present material neglects these needs altogether and cannot even be readily adapted for use in rural schools; it is too completely slanted for the city. There is an almost complete disjunction between the situations and problems some textbooks present and the social and economic conditions and everyday life of the country. Naturally, such texts seem uninteresting and unreal to rural children and are either ineffectual or have an effect quite different from the one intended.

Problems of the small high school.—The small rural high school has difficulties as serious as those of the small elementary school. In common with the latter it faces the problems of attracting well-prepared teachers, keeping their teaching assignment from becoming too heavy and too broad, and yet offering a diversified program. In common with all secondary schools it faces the necessity of adjusting itself to a shift which in half a century has transformed the high school from a college-preparatory institution enrolling less than 4 per cent of the young people fourteen to seventeen years of age to an institution of general education enrolling 60 per cent of all youth even in rural areas. Additionally, however, the rural high school must face the prospect that many of its students will migrate. Ideally, as Edmund deS. Brunner points out, it should adjust its program to the needs of four groups: "Those who will return to the farm, those who will enter service occupations in the villages, those who will migrate directly to the cities, and those who will go to college."

The task of offering a single program which is rich and adjusted to modern needs is not an easy one for the small high school, and a recent study in New York State found that even schools with 250 and 300 students face difficulties in offering varied courses of instruction. Since half the rural high schools enrol fewer than a hundred students, it is not surprising that they ordinarily restrict themselves to a single curriculum, with perhaps a few additional offerings such as vocational agriculture and home economics. In view of the fact

that no more than an eighth of all graduates and a much lower percentage of the total student body go on to college, it is unfortunate, however, that the single curriculum available is primarily designed to prepare for college entrance. Inevitably, such a curriculum only incidentally serves the needs of the vast majority of students for whom the secondary school is a terminal preparation for life and work.

Difficulties in serving special groups.—In part because of inadequate facilities and in part because people are widely scattered and in some cases far distant from existing institutions, rural areas face unusual difficulties in providing educational service for various special groups—adults, out-of-school youth, and handicapped and exceptional children. The rural high school, which is frequently the one institution in which most of the people have a common interest, should logically serve as a community center. Frequently, however, it is too small to provide a suitable meeting place and has only the most limited facilities, or none at all, for vocational education, entertainment, and athletics. It may lack gymnasium, library, and playground facilities.

Although exceptional or handicapped children are probably as numerous, relatively, in the country as in the city, rural areas face obvious difficulties in providing for their educational needs. As Katherine Cook, of the Office of Education, points out, a given school district may contain "one crippled child, a deaf or a hard-of-hearing child, one or two mentally retarded children, a stammerer, one who has defective vision, and an especially brilliant pupil," but there will almost certainly not be enough children in any one group to warrant the organization of a special class. As has been demonstrated in a number of places, special equipment and various types of adjustments often make it possible to include handicapped children in the same classes with normal children. In some places handicapped children are being educated, either at home or at school, by means of individual instruction or correspondence study. In many rural areas, however, little or nothing is being done to meet the special needs of children who are especially talented or who suffer from various types of serious handicaps.

The advantages of rural schools.—This sketch of the problems of

education in rural areas and the conditions which prevail generally may give an erroneous impression. Rural schools have distinct advantages as well as disadvantages. Country life is rich in educational possibilities which the schools are gradually learning to exploit. Family life and relationships, for example, tend to be more meaningful in the country. The natural environment can be utilized both as a means to many kinds of understanding and as a stimulus to aesthetic expression. The social environment can be capitalized educationally far more easily than in the city. The different occupations in the community either come within the child's daily range of experience or are readily accessible for study. The community agencies and institutions, from clubs to local government, are relatively simple in their functions and organization. Thus, if properly directed, the rural child is in a better position than the city child to orient himself to his total environment and to perceive the essential nature of its component parts. He has better opportunities, too, for actual participation in the activities of home and community—in part because of the relatively simple nature of many of those activities and in part because of the close integration in most rural areas of school and community.

Educators are just beginning to rediscover the value of another feature of rural life—the number of work opportunities it offers for children. Around a farm in particular there are always chores to be done which are not beyond the strength of any but the smallest children. From an early age both boys and girls can be given definite, and constantly increasing, responsibilities in connection with productive and important work. Participation in the family's work gives a child a sense of social acceptance and confidence in himself. In the performance of his chores he acquires not only many skills but, imperceptibly, a great deal of knowledge. What is perhaps most important of all, he gradually and in most cases pleasurably develops the capacity for hard work and the acceptance of responsibility which are indispensable to success in any vocation. So valuable are these outcomes that educators are beginning to recognize the desirability of providing artificially, if necessary, for the kind of work experience which country life affords naturally.

With effort and resourcefulness the disadvantages faced by rural

schools can be minimized or overcome altogether. In some cases they can be converted into advantages. There are important educational possibilities, for example, in having a small group of children to work with and in keeping the same group for several years. The fact that the children are of different ages proves to have advantages, as well as disadvantages, once the formal, urban pattern of strict grading is abandoned.

Many rural schools in all parts of the country are finding ways of overcoming financial and other obstacles and of capitalizing their educational advantages. Increasingly the states are helping rural people to provide more adequate educational opportunities, and there is a growing recognition of the responsibility of the federal government in this connection. Thus practice and trends now in evidence furnish grounds for hope of widespread improvement in rural educational conditions. That hope has dominated this entire study. Its focus is neither on present inadequacies nor on impossible ideals, but on what is being accomplished today in some rural schools and on further possibilities which are practicable as well as desirable. Chapter iii considers the possibilities which exist for reorganizing rural schools into more efficient and economical administrative and attendance units.

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CHAPTER III

REORGANIZATION: PAVING THE WAY FOR A BETTER PROGRAM

SINCE the resources of rural people are limited, it is of the utmost importance that they organize their schools as efficiently and economically as possible. This means, in most instances, securing larger school districts and larger schools. There is a growing awareness that existing school districts and schools are in general too small to provide the type of educational service modern conditions demand except at prohibitive cost.

It is hardly surprising that the present organizational structure of the rural schools is inadequate for the educational job of today. The original common-school district, which is still the predominant rural administrative unit, was established to provide for elementary education alone and at a time when the curriculum was largely confined to the three R's. Today the schools must prepare students for a complex society. The curriculum has been broadened, and, in recognition of the need for a much longer period of schooling, high schools and, more recently, junior colleges have been established. There is a growing realization of the responsibility of the school to the community as a whole and to various special groups. The common-school district is simply too small and too poor in most instances to provide for these augmented educational demands.

Social and economic changes have also tended to make the original school structure obsolete. Improved transportation and roads, for example, have made the boundaries of many common-school districts meaningless and have created important new social groupings. For schools to be in vital relationship to the life of today, it is clearly essential for them to take account of these new groupings in their location, program, and administration.

Various patchwork devices have been tried in an effort to overcome the weaknesses of the original common-school district. For ex-

ample, a separate administrative unit has been set up in many places to establish and maintain a high school. The resulting dual school system has been clumsy, uneconomical, and educationally ineffective. It has created a gap between the elementary school and the high school, instead of encouraging the development of a coherent, well-articulated twelve-year program. Other makeshift attempts to improve the rural school organizational structure have been equally unsuccessful. Increasingly it is being recognized that what is needed is a fundamental reorganization. An organization must be achieved which will make possible a complete, rich, well-integrated, and economical educational program in rural America.

Administrative units and attendance areas.—The effort to secure a more satisfactory organization of rural education has two separate, though related, phases: (1) reorganization of attendance areas and (2) reorganization of administrative units. An attendance area is simply the geographic area within which live the children attending a given school. The territory from which an elementary school draws its pupils constitutes an elementary-school attendance area. The territory from which a high school draws its pupils constitutes a high-school attendance area. Similarly, one can speak of the attendance area of a twelve-year school, a junior high school, or a senior high school. Obviously, a primary consideration in determining the ideal size of, say, an elementary-school attendance area is the number of pupils who can be most efficiently and economically educated in an elementary school. But certain other factors must be considered—the boundaries of the community in which the school is located, the distance the children will have to travel, etc.

An administrative unit is “a geographic area within which all schools are under a single administrative head.” It provides those administrative and supervisory services which are not furnished by the state and is ordinarily the unit through which local funds for the support of public education are raised. Its boundaries need not and generally should not coincide with those of an attendance area, for obviously it is inefficient to provide for separate administration and financing of each individual school. The factors which should determine the size of the administrative unit and those which should determine the size of the attendance unit are discussed below. Some

factors apply to both—neither administrative nor attendance-area boundaries, for example, can be drawn without consideration of present social groupings—but it must be remembered that the administrative unit and the attendance unit are distinct, that they have different functions, and that the efficient administrative unit will ordinarily contain a good many schools, each with its own attendance area.

SECURING EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS

The administration, supervision, and financing of schools are all only means to an end—provision of satisfactory educational service. The primary consideration in determining the size of an administrative unit, therefore, is how large it need be to furnish, at reasonable cost, an adequate and well-rounded educational program. Most state and national conferences on reorganization have begun by considering the sort of program the schools ought to offer. For example, a conference which met in 1935 under the auspices of the United States Office of Education stated in its report that the schools should provide “adequate educational opportunity for every child from the time he enters the school until he is ready to take his place in adult society.” Adequate opportunity, it was agreed, should include not only “mastery of the common integrating knowledge and skills” but work in the arts, manual activity, a health and physical education program, prevocational and vocational preparation, and guidance. The entire program should be based on the needs and development of the children, and there should be special adaptations for children socially, physically, or mentally handicapped or unusually talented.

Obviously, a small administrative unit with limited finances cannot establish schools equipped to offer this type of educational program. Some of the educational services it includes can be efficiently and economically provided only in a large school or in a group of schools. In a small administrative unit the per-pupil cost of adapting the program to the needs of individual children, especially if they were handicapped, would be prohibitively high. An effective administrative unit will be large enough to escape these disadvantages and to offer a broad, rich program adapted to the needs of all the children within its boundaries.

Each unit should contain at least one high school.—An administrative unit should also be large enough to offer at least twelve years of schooling. This means that it should contain at least one high school. At the present time thousands of administrative units fail to fulfil this requirement. In Michigan, youth from more than three-fourths of the land area of the state must go outside their school district for their secondary-school education. This situation is typical, not exceptional. There are fewer than ten states where all youth live within a school district maintaining a high school.

Various makeshift arrangements have been developed to make high-school attendance possible for youth in districts without high-school facilities, but none of them has proved wholly satisfactory. The weaknesses of the high-school unit superimposed upon a group of common-school units have already been mentioned. Another common arrangement is for youth from districts without secondary-school facilities, generally open-country districts, to be transported to near-by high schools, usually located in villages, with the state in many cases paying some or all of the cost of transportation and tuition. It is often desirable to locate high schools and even elementary schools in villages though some of their students come from the surrounding countryside. But this particular arrangement deprives farm people of a voice in the education of their children. Sometimes as many as 80 per cent of the youth attending a village high school come from tributary districts without high-school facilities. Yet the parents of those youth have nothing to say about the character of the educational program the school should offer. This is undemocratic, and it has frequently resulted in a curriculum poorly adapted to the needs of farm youth and unattractive to them.

An administrative unit should be large enough not only to provide its own high school but to provide one of adequate size. As was pointed out in chapter ii, the rural high school must serve the needs of four different groups of pupils. It is essential that it be able to offer a broad program.

Not only the needs of youth but those of the entire population make it desirable that each administrative unit should contain at least one high school. No other rural institution can command the interest and allegiance of so many of the people. Thus the high

school has a unique opportunity to unify the community and to serve as an educational, social, and recreational center. The realization of this opportunity, too, requires that the high school be large and adequately equipped.

Administrative and supervisory service.—An administrative unit should also be large enough to provide administrative and supervisory services. There is clearly a need for some unit intermediate between the state and the individual school which can furnish educational leadership. Such a unit can correlate the efforts of individual schools, adjudicate disputes between them, formulate educational policies, plan the curriculum, supervise the work of teachers, and arrange such things as transportation and supervision of attendance.

Such services require able lay and professional leadership. In general, the larger the population there is on which to draw, the easier it is to obtain a progressive, well-informed school board. The administrative unit should also be large enough to command the services of an adequately trained, professionally competent superintendent of schools whose security of tenure may be assured. Experience has demonstrated that appointment by the board represents the best means of selecting the superintendent. Popular election is less likely to secure a superintendent who is well prepared professionally and it inevitably involves insecurity of tenure.

The administrative unit should also have sufficient resources to employ professional supervisors capable of helping teachers and improving the quality of instruction. In 1935, despite some gain in the preceding five years, there were local supervisors in only 27 per cent of the counties in the United States. While some states provide supervisory service, only a few employ enough supervisors to make possible frequent visits and intensive work. Countless rural schools receive little or no supervision which is really effective. Most of the 9,756 one-teacher schools in Illinois, for example, receive no supervisory service except that which is furnished by county superintendents elected on a political basis and by nine state inspectors who are responsible for village, town, and large rural, as well as small rural, schools. Even in the South, where the county administrative unit prevails, it is estimated that only about a fourth of the white rural schools receive professional supervision.

Financial support and economical operation.—It is also essential that an administrative unit be large enough to provide a broad base for local taxation and to facilitate economical operation of the schools. Very small districts are at a disadvantage both in raising money and in getting maximum results from what they spend. Typically their schools are small, with low pupil-teacher ratios and high per-pupil costs. Any special service is likely to be burdensome because its cost must be distributed among relatively few pupils. The small district cannot ordinarily afford to employ someone with special ability in business management. Usually it cannot take advantage of the economies possible from purchasing supplies in large quantities.

Research studies, and the actual experience of many schools have demonstrated that reorganization sometimes permits both a higher quality of educational service and a lower dollars-and-cents expenditure for education. Well-planned reorganization makes possible the provision of the same quality of educational service at a lower cost or the provision of a higher quality of service for less than it would have cost under the previous administrative structure.

In Oklahoma a careful study was made of the effect a proposed reorganization of both administrative and attendance units would have upon costs. It was found that, had the proposed organization been in effect in 1935-36, the cost of education could have been reduced from \$28,098,318 to \$26,681,216, resulting in a saving of \$1,417,102. Furthermore, instruction would have been more effective, it was believed, even without special effort to improve it, because of the more efficient teaching possible in larger schools. Further comparisons showed that either minimum or enriched educational programs could be provided more economically through the proposed organizational structure. Intensive studies in fifteen California counties showed that reorganization would reduce per-pupil costs 7.4 per cent and achieve annual savings of nearly five million dollars. Studies in Iowa, Montana, and many other states have shown that reorganization would result in substantial economies. A reorganization in West Virginia, which combined 398 units of administration into 55, was responsible for savings of over four million dollars the first year it was in effect.

Even such a service as transportation, which might be expected to increase in cost as a result of enlarged attendance and administrative units, can in fact sometimes be provided more reasonably by large administrative units. The West Virginia reorganization reduced the cost of transportation, and studies in Pennsylvania and Ohio have shown that transportation costs relatively less in larger school districts. Overlapping of bus trips within and between small districts can often be eliminated by reorganization. One county superintendent in Ohio estimated that thirty-three thousand dollars could be saved annually in his county by arranging transportation on a county-wide basis.

Reorganization of schools in larger administrative units would markedly reduce the variations in the wealth of school districts, which is one of the most stubborn causes of the present inequality of educational opportunity. At present in Arizona the assessed wealth per pupil in the poorest school district is \$42; in the richest district it is \$187,859. Under a proposed reorganization the range would be from \$1,000 to \$27,000. Similarly, in Arkansas the present range is from \$21 to \$6,000, while after reorganization it would be from \$271 to \$1,337.

The disparities in wealth which will exist even under an ideal organizational structure show that outside financial help is needed if equality of educational opportunity is to be obtained for children in poor rural areas. On the other hand, the extent to which the disparities can be reduced is a heartening revelation of what rural people can accomplish by organizing their own resources most efficiently. Reorganization can do a great deal to equalize the ability to support education and to relieve the hard-pressed people in small, poor school districts, who must now tax themselves heavily to provide even meager school facilities. At present some districts in Arizona are levying a tax of \$2.74 on each one hundred dollars of assessed wealth. Under the proposed reorganization the highest levy would be \$1.02. Only 3 per cent of the districts, as compared with 11 per cent at present, would have to levy a tax of more than a dollar.

Limitations on the size of administrative units.—While the discussion so far has emphasized the desirability of administrative districts larger than at present, it is equally important that they not be

so large as to endanger democratic local control of the schools. Subject to the undeniable right of the states to establish standards and to insist on certain minimum requirements, in a democratic society it is essential that the schools belong to the communities they serve and be responsive to their needs. Because of the increasing complexity of education, it has become necessary to delegate responsibility for the administration of schools to professional educators, but it is as important as it was in pioneer days that the school program should express the wishes of the people. It is important to the people, who have a vital stake in the schools which educate their children, and to whom control of the schools represents one of the most essential democratic rights. It is equally important to the schools themselves, which exist to serve society and would lose their meaning and value if they were not responsive to its demands. Particularly in rural America where the school has an unusual opportunity to serve not only the educational but many social and recreational needs of the entire population, it is desirable that the relationship between school and community be close. The administrative unit should be small enough, therefore, to be responsive to local conditions and needs and to encourage on the part of the people a proprietary and responsible interest in the schools.

In addition, of course, the administrative unit must be able to translate the wishes and demands of the people into an adequate educational program. It is here that many existing local school districts fail: they are too small and weak to fulfil their educational responsibilities. What is needed is a local administrative unit which is at once democratic and strong, aware of its own educational needs and able to satisfy them. Such a unit can be secured only by reorganization.

The most probable alternative to reorganization is not the indefinite survival of the existing inefficient school districts but increased state control of education. As the states have increased their financial support of the schools, there has been a pronounced tendency for them to extend their control as well. This development is largely a result of the failure of many districts to provide adequate educational opportunities for their children. While it is desirable that the states should be alive to their educational responsibilities,

the values of local control of the school should be conserved. The rural people themselves must recognize the necessity of securing, through reorganization, an administrative unit which is responsive to their needs and capable of fulfilling them.

The administrative unit and the community.—Democratic control of the schools can be fostered by taking account of the social and geographic entity sociologists call the “community” in determining the boundaries of both administrative units and attendance areas. The community is not a governmental unit but something far more important, a natural grouping of the people in a given area as a result of their social and economic life. Common interests and purposes and interdependence unite the people living relatively close together into a functioning social group, characterized by close relationships. For example, the people in a village and the surrounding open country may be bound to one another by ties of mutual dependence. Many villages are primarily service stations for the surrounding countryside. Their economic life, for example, is built around acting as purchasing agent for the farmer, and financing, transporting, and processing many of the things he produces. Such villages are dependent on the farmer for their very existence; he is dependent on them for the services they provide. Increasingly, the same sort of interdependence between village and open country is evident with respect to social functions—educational, recreational, and welfare services.

The typical rural community of today is village-centered. Just how much territory a community will encompass depends on many factors—the geographic character of an area, population density, and transportation facilities. A county usually contains from seven to fourteen communities. The exact limits of many communities are shifting and difficult to ascertain. Far from invalidating the importance of the community, this merely testifies to its living character. Sociologists agree that in most parts of the nation the community is the most vital and fundamental rural social grouping.

The importance of a close functional relationship between the schools and a social unit of such basic importance is self-evident. Sometimes this result occurs quite naturally: many studies have shown that the school, particularly the twelve-year school or the

high school capable of offering a broad program for both children and adults, is itself one of the most potent influences in determining community boundaries and integrating community life. Where, on the other hand, the question is one of establishing or relocating schools, there is general agreement among educators as to the desirability of utilizing the community as the unit for the high-school attendance area. In some cases, as will be brought out later, it is necessary to utilize a smaller social and geographic unit for the elementary-school attendance area, but it is nearly always advantageous to have the boundaries of the high-school attendance area accord with the boundaries of the community.

Many educators and sociologists believe that the community is also the best administrative unit. The advantages of the community-sized administrative unit as compared with units of smaller size will be apparent from the entire preceding discussion. Its fundamental advantages as compared with still larger units, or units drawn in accordance with the boundaries of political subdivisions, are that it facilitates democratic control of public education and the closest sort of integration between school and community. Proponents of the community-sized administrative unit concede that there are certain educational services it may not be able to provide, but they point out, first, that the natural sociological community is tending to increase in size and, second, that such services can be secured through the co-operation of neighboring units or furnished by the state or some type of intermediate administrative unit. Junior colleges, for example, can be established and administered by a number of neighboring community units acting together.

Another prominent and influential group of educators believe that the community-sized administrative unit is too small to meet the educational needs of today; they advocate administrative units composed of a number of neighboring communities sufficiently homogeneous in population and unified in outlook to work closely together. The feasibility of units of such size, they feel, is demonstrated by the rapidity with which informal co-operation between communities is growing as communication and transportation facilities improve. The advantages of an administrative unit which embraces a number of communities, provided that it can be established

without marked sacrifice of local control and popular interest in the work of the schools, are numerous and important. Such a unit will in most places be able to provide good elementary schools, one or more strong high schools, and a junior college—making a complete and well-integrated fourteen-year educational program available to all the children in the area. Everywhere in its jurisdiction the work of all schools—whether in towns, villages, or open country—can be articulated with those on the next higher level, facilitating the prog-



Farm Security Administration Photographer Marion Post

THE TYPE OF ATTRACTIVE SCHOOL WHICH REORGANIZATION
OFTEN MAKES POSSIBLE

ress of children and encouraging them to stay in school for a complete six-year secondary education.

The relative merits of the community-sized administrative unit and the multi-community unit cannot be assessed until more evidence has accumulated, as a result both of the actual experience of different localities and of careful research studies. In view of the many factors which must be considered in determining the size of the administrative unit, the community-sized unit may prove more satisfactory in some localities and the multi-community unit elsewhere. It appears certain, however, that in either case the boundaries of

natural communities should be an important factor in the establishment of local units of school administration.

The proper size of the administrative unit.—Since the size of the administrative unit must be determined by a consideration of a number of environmental, social, and educational factors, it is to be expected that units will vary in size, and in nature and structure, not only in various parts of the country but within any single state. There is no one “best” size or type of unit. Both careful research and experience indicate, however, that to provide adequate and economical administrative service, a unit should contain a minimum of forty teachers and, roughly, twelve hundred pupils, and that there will be gains in efficiency in administrative units employing up to three hundred teachers. In some reorganizations, it may be necessary to have units which fall somewhat below these minimums, but some sacrifice of either economy or efficiency will generally be entailed.

Beyond any question, most existing school districts are far too small either to provide a high quality of educational service or to function economically. In comparison with the minimum standards cited above, in the twenty-six states which maintain common-school districts or independent local districts the average administrative unit has only five teachers. In the ten states organized on the town or township basis the average unit has only twenty-seven teachers. More than half of the independent school districts maintain only a single one-room school. There are today approximately 125,000 administrative units as compared with about 240,000 attendance areas. After pointing out the need of further study of the rural school administrative structure, the Advisory Committee on Education declares:

Enough is already known, however, to demonstrate conclusively that, in these days of rapid communication and larger community areas, there is no justification for the system of rural school district organization existing in most States. The system is wasteful of money and of human effort. It is largely responsible for the most inadequate school housing, restricted educational offerings, poorly trained and poorly paid teachers, high per pupil costs for the service rendered, an absence of constructive supervision of teaching, and countless other deficiencies.

Six of ten states which participated in a recent study of local school organization (Illinois, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and California) found many of their school districts so small that even if all the pupils within a district attended a single school it would not be large enough to be educationally efficient.

SECURING EFFICIENT ATTENDANCE UNITS

In addition to achieving an efficient administrative unit, reorganization must make provision for satisfactory attendance areas. The boundaries of administrative and attendance areas need not, and typically will not, coincide.

Reorganization of administrative and attendance areas need not take place simultaneously. In a great many successful reorganizations attention has first been given to securing a sound administrative structure. Each administrative unit has then taken the initiative in arranging more satisfactory attendance areas in its jurisdiction.

Standards for the size of attendance areas.—In determining the size of an attendance area, as in drawing boundaries of an administrative unit, both educational and environmental factors must be considered. An attendance area should contain enough children so that its school will be able to furnish an adequate and, if possible, a rich program. However, it is obviously undesirable to draw the children from too wide an area or from markedly diverse communities. Since population density and transportation conditions vary greatly in different localities, there can clearly be no one ideal size for an attendance area, any more than there is one best size for an administrative unit.

However, the conference held in 1935 under the auspices of the United States Office of Education, which has already been referred to, was able to agree on certain standards which should be met, whenever feasible, in determining the size of elementary- and high-school attendance areas.

The elementary-school attendance area should be large enough, wherever practicable, to make possible a school with at least one teacher for each grade and a ratio of thirty pupils per teacher. However, children should not have to walk more than one and a half or two miles to and from school or spend more than one hour coming to

or getting from school when transportation is provided. Nor should they be transported over unusually hazardous routes.

The high-school attendance area should be large enough to make possible a junior high school, a senior high school, or, better, a combined junior-senior high school, each with a minimum of three hundred pupils and ten teachers. However, the pupils should not have to walk more than two or two and a half miles to or from school or spend more than one and a half hours coming to and going from school when transportation is provided.

These standards, as the conference itself emphasized, are suggestive only. Local adjustments will often be necessary. In some places it will not be possible to achieve the standards for both the minimum size of the school and the maximum time that should be spent in transportation. Furthermore, it is highly important that the boundaries of attendance areas, too, should be drawn, whenever possible, to accord with the natural social groupings of the rural population.

The elementary school and the neighborhood.—It has already been mentioned that it is desirable to have the boundaries of the high-school attendance area coincide with those of the community. In the community-centered school the things students learn and do can be closely tied up with the actual life going on around them, which inevitably makes their education more meaningful. The co-operation of parents can be more readily obtained. Special services can be provided which benefit the community and add to the school's vitality and influence. In many cases, however, the community cannot serve as the basis for the elementary-school attendance area. For example, in sparsely settled regions with poor transportation facilities, it is not feasible to have all the children in a community attend a single school because of the excessive amount of time some of them would have to spend in getting to and from school. Fortunately, in many rural areas there is another, smaller, social unit with desirable characteristics for an elementary-school attendance area—the neighborhood.

A neighborhood is simply a relatively small geographic area within which the families feel closely bound to one another. Mutual assistance is a common practice and social relationships are warm and

close, though, of course, conflicts and antagonisms may also exist. With the development of rapid means of communication and transportation, the community has gradually supplanted the neighborhood as the basic rural social group, but in many parts of the country neighborhoods retain their cohesion and strength and promise to continue to do so for a long time to come.

As the next natural social grouping beyond the family, the neighborhood possesses many advantages as the elementary-school attendance area, the chief being that it permits a gradual, easy transition for the child from the family to the outside world. A child attending a school in his own neighborhood remains in close contact with the first and most basic educational unit, the home and the family. He does not have to travel far, and his introduction to a new and complex environment is delayed until he is more mature and more sturdy physically. These characteristics particularly recommend the neighborhood as the attendance unit for the lower elementary grades.

A neighborhood school, like a community school, reaps many advantages from being a part of a natural social group, and at the same time contributes to the cohesion of that group. In many parts of the country the schoolhouse is the natural—sometimes the only—neighborhood meeting place.

When elementary schools are located in open-country neighborhoods and the high school is in a village, special effort must be exerted to articulate their programs and to make the child's transfer to high school natural and easy. It is important that country children attend high school and feel at home there. There should be no division of the students into "country kids" and "town kids." A large and growing number of village high schools invite eighth-grade country-school pupils to come in for an all-day visit which is designed to encourage them to continue their education. As has been indicated, the break between the elementary- and high-school curriculums should be as slight as possible, so that high school will not seem difficult and unappealing. When the elementary schools and the high school are in one administrative unit, a close integration of their programs is relatively easy to achieve.

PROGRESS TOWARD REORGANIZATION

Progress toward a more satisfactory organizational structure for rural education has been painfully slow. The Advisory Committee on Education estimates that at the present rate it will take half a century to eliminate inadequate district organization. Yet some headway has been made toward the achievement of more satisfactory administrative and attendance areas, and there is reason to believe that progress will be more rapid from now on.

A few states have substantially reduced the number of administrative units in recent years. West Virginia's reorganization has already been mentioned. In New York between 1925 and 1936, 185 central rural school districts were established in territory formerly divided into 1,967 districts. Furthermore, these central districts have tended to become progressively larger. In Ohio and in other states, programs are now under way which will substantially reduce the number of small, inadequate school districts.

In most parts of the country some progress has been made toward the achievement of more satisfactory attendance units. This is evident both from the reduction in the number of one-room schools and from the increase in the number of consolidated schools. In the last twenty years approximately 70,000 one-room schools have been eliminated as a consequence of the establishment of larger school attendance areas. The number of so-called consolidated schools has increased from 5,000 to 17,500. Although a consolidated school may be anything from a one-room school replacing two still smaller units to a large and strong twelve-year school replacing many small units, the figures indicate a clear-cut trend toward larger schools.

Prospects for the future.—Much additional progress must be made before a satisfactory rural school organizational structure is achieved, but the growing recognition of the need for improvement provides a basis for optimism. Thirty-two states expressed the desire to participate in the Local School Units Project sponsored by the United States Office of Education in 1935. Because of limitation of funds, only ten states could be included in the study. All these states, however—Arizona, Arkansas, California, Illinois, Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee—

have been able to lay the most careful plans for improving the organization of their schools. Many other states have independently made similar studies, and there are, in addition, a great many studies of smaller geographic areas made by local administrative officials or by students. These studies, which show the benefits and the economies which will result from reorganization, are certain to stimulate thinking and action. The Local School Units Project gave special attention to procedures for securing widespread public support for its recommendations.

The plans of the states participating in the project show how much remains to be done to secure efficient organization. It is hoped to reduce the number of administrative units in Arizona from 434 to 29; in Arkansas from 3,134 to 75; in California from 3,062 to 296 or 88, depending on which of two alternative plans is adopted; and in Ohio from 1,593 to 734. Many small inefficient schools must also be eliminated. Kentucky hopes to reduce the number of one-teacher elementary schools from 5,732 to 1,659 and the number of two-teacher schools from more than 1,000 to less than 400. It is proposed that all of the 54 existing one-teacher high schools be eliminated, that the number of two-teacher high schools be reduced from 195 to 16, and that the number of three-teacher schools be reduced from 150 to 6. Arkansas hopes to decrease the percentage of one-teacher white schools from 55 to 26 and to increase the percentage of schools having more than two hundred pupils from 12 to 34. In one year, 1936, Ohio reduced the number of its one-teacher schools from 2,387 to 1,889; and it plans to eliminate ultimately all but 7.

The necessity for careful planning.—Unfortunately, some past efforts to reorganize rural schools have been unsound and unsuccessful. Although satisfactory organization involves the attainment of efficient administrative and attendance units, many past reorganizations have stopped as soon as they have improved one or the other. Other reorganizations have been unsatisfactory because they have laid out administrative and attendance units without regard for natural social groupings. Some attendance areas, especially elementary-school attendance areas, have been made altogether too large. They have required small children to be transported long distances and to be away from home from early in the morning to late in

the afternoon. In still other cases, a sort of magical dependence has been placed upon reorganization; schools have been enlarged without any subsequent effort being made to improve and enrich their educational programs.

In some reorganizations, districts which should have been included in an administrative unit on the basis of their geographic loca-

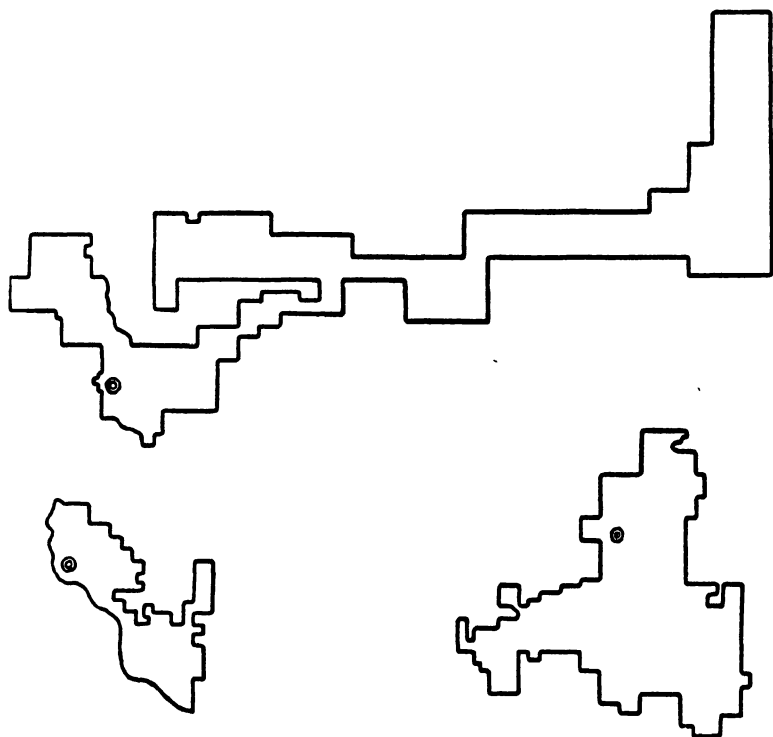


FIG. 4.—Typical school-district boundaries. Note not only the helter-skelter boundaries but the worse than accidental location of the schools, in each case marked by the symbol ⊙ (A reproduction from the maps of Washington state school districts.)

tion have been excluded, usually because they were poor. This has resulted in ill-formed, inefficient districts and misplaced school buildings. Figure 4 shows some of the curiously shaped districts which were revealed by a recent survey in the state of Washington. Also, many reorganizations have been financially unsound. Inadequate provision has been made for the construction of new buildings or the purchase of busses called for by the reorganization, or the capital

outlay on them has exhausted the new unit's financial resources and cramped operating expenditures.

Unsuccessful reorganizations have disappointed people in the areas they affected, furnished ammunition to "stand-patters," and retarded the entire movement to reform the present inadequate structure of rural education. What they really prove, however, is not that reorganization is valueless but that it must be carefully planned. Success depends on the most thorough preliminary study of all relevant educational, economic, geographic, and social factors.

The role of the state in reorganization.—Individual school districts, particularly the smaller, poorer ones most in need of a better organizational structure, seldom have the resources for the thorough planning which should precede reorganization. The state, therefore, either through its department of education or through some special agency, should assume responsibility for sponsoring this planning. Not only does the state have superior resources but it is advantageously situated to secure the co-operation of the individual school districts and to co-ordinate the changes which are made.

State, and even federal, assistance with reorganization is desirable for many reasons. State laws, for example, may make reorganization extremely difficult. It is necessary to secure the repeal of such laws and to secure legislation which will facilitate reorganization. State school funds must be apportioned so as to encourage the establishment of larger and more efficient school units. Present apportionments sometimes penalize reorganization. Perhaps, most important of all, the assistance of the states and the federal government may be required in connection with the capital expenditures necessitated by reorganization. The inability of local units to finance these expenditures may otherwise block changes which will make possible not only educational improvement but dollars-and-cents economies. The role which the states and the federal government should play in reorganization will be discussed in greater detail in chapter xvi, but the importance of assistance from them should be kept in mind.

Reorganization is unlikely to be successful, however, if it is imposed from the outside. Coercive attempts to alter school units have almost invariably aroused antagonism, limited the effectiveness of changes which have been made, and retarded further reorganization.

Democratic procedure is essential to the achievement of a sounder school organizational structure. This does not mean that a recalcitrant minority should be permitted to block a desired improvement. Satisfactory procedure for securing reorganization, while protecting the people from changes they do not want, should facilitate the adoption of changes which the majority approve. The procedure suggested by the Regents' Inquiry into the Character and Cost of Public Education in the State of New York, to be discussed in chapter xvi, is one of several which fulfil these requirements.

The limitations of reorganization.—Reorganization can be regarded in two lights—as a panacea or as a preliminary step toward the achievement of a more adequate educational program in rural schools. When reorganization is undertaken as a panacea, it is certain to result in disappointment. Although large administrative units will tend to reduce the present striking discrepancies in the wealth of school districts, they cannot equalize resources and the educational burden. Larger attendance areas are no guaranty of a richer and more effective educational program; they merely provide the conditions under which such a program can more readily come into being. If reorganization is viewed as a preliminary to other changes rather than as an end in itself, its importance cannot easily be overemphasized. Nothing will do so much to facilitate a general improvement in rural education as the achievement of a sound organizational structure.

It must be remembered, however, that even when such a structure is achieved there will be many small schools and that to be effective, rural schools, small and large, must develop a rich, realistic educational program in keeping with the conditions of today. Reorganization will not eliminate small schools completely. It is not to be forgotten that there are still more than four million children attending one- and two-room schools. As has been seen, many states are planning sharp reductions in the number of their small schools, but even in those states there will still be some such schools. Other states, such as Vermont, are not planning any considerable reduction in the number of one- and two-room schools. Small schools are certain to persist for a long time to come.

Furthermore, the basic objective in rural education, to which re-

organization is but a means, is improvement in the quality of the educational service offered by all rural schools. It would be a mistake to assume either that improvement will automatically follow in the wake of consolidation or that work of a satisfactory character is impossible in small schools. Despite the disadvantages under which they operate, many small schools are contributing to the development of a sounder, more effective educational approach. In particular, good work is being done in many one-teacher schools which include the lower grades only and in graded one-teacher schools, as in Connecticut, which include only one or two grades. Chapter iv begins the discussion of the kind of educational programs which are coming into being in modern rural schools, small and large.

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CHAPTER IV

VITALIZING THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

THE central problem of rural education, as of American education generally, is the development of educational programs which will adequately prepare students for the life of today. Rapid strides are being made in some rural schools toward the development of such programs. The objectives of education are being re-worked and redefined. Traditional educational content and methods and forms of organization are being challenged. Here one school is attempting to reshape the curriculum to make it more in keeping with modern life. There another is experimenting with new methods of instruction, perhaps designed to overcome obstacles or capitalize advantages connected with its location or its size. Out of this questioning, this ferment, and this experimentation there are emerging programs of high promise.

This chapter will attempt to describe these programs. Such an attempt may be misleading in one of two different ways. It may suggest that the improved methods being tried in some schools are being used in the majority of schools or even in all of them. Such an impression would, of course, be completely erroneous. The conditions which prevail in rural schools generally, already described in chapter ii, have blocked or retarded attempts to raise the level of educational service in the majority of schools. Limited in both means and personnel, most rural schools have felt unable to evaluate what they were doing or to effect important improvements. They have offered a restricted and impoverished version of a traditional program, adapted hardly at all to time and place. While we should draw encouragement from the progress being made in some schools, it should not be permitted to obscure this general situation. It should be remembered, furthermore, that what is reported here is a composite picture and that only a few schools have made any large number of the innovations which are described.

On the other hand, it is equally important to remember that what

is being described is a cross-section of actual and typical achievements. The discussion is based neither on ideals nor on what is being done in only one or two schools under exceptionally favorable conditions. It is an account—by no means exhaustive—of what is being accomplished in a considerable number of village and country schools, sometimes on extremely limited resources. In general, the programs and activities described illustrate, in spirit if not in detail, what many of the more alert rural schools are trying to do. Instead of being isolated or exceptional examples, they typify trends. Although the programs reported are far superior to those in the vast majority of rural schools, they are the harbingers of a practicable general improvement.

Significant new emphases in education.—New ideas about the nature and purposes of the educational process underlie the changes which are taking place in forward-looking schools in city and country. Yesterday society was content if its schools taught children a limited amount of information and the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic. The secondary school was expected, in addition, to prepare for college entrance the few destined for the professions. Today the schools have been assigned a far more comprehensive and vital task: to prepare children for life in its numerous aspects. An attempt is being made to develop an educational program which will equip students for their future responsibilities as citizens, workers, and parents and which will help them to realize full potentialities. For the attainment of such objectives the inadequacy of the traditional academic curriculum is apparent. But the alteration and broadening of the content of education represent only one aspect of the present attempt to vitalize the work of the schools. Changes in methods of instruction and in the organization of the school program are equally important. To some extent every aspect of education has been affected by the increased emphasis being placed on children and their needs.

Increased consideration is being paid today to the needs of the individual child as well as to those of the group. Teachers are more sensitive to the way children differ from one another in personality, in ability, in background, in interests, in what they want from education. A keener social responsibility exists for exceptional and

handicapped children. The cut-and-dried curriculum of yesterday is being superseded by flexible programs adjusted, to some extent at least, to the needs of each individual child. In addition to affecting classroom work, this shift has led to the establishment of special student guidance programs, which will be discussed in chapter v.

All the needs of children, and not merely their intellectual development, are being considered. The vast majority of schools display some interest in their students' health and physical well-being, and a large number are concerned with their character and personality development as well. Most schools are attempting to give their students a sense of social values; a few are providing experiences which will help students to develop techniques of social action. Neighborly co-operation has always been characteristic of rural life, but a well-developed social sense is necessary in the interrelated and delicately adjusted world of today.

If students are to be prepared for life, the school itself must be closely related to the world in which it functions. Thus the modern school is giving increased attention to the social group it serves. In this and subsequent chapters this group will frequently be referred to as a community even when it is not a community in the strict sociological sense of the word. Without losing sight of general educational objectives, the modern school utilizes the community as an invaluable laboratory in which students can get a firsthand impression of social, economic, and political organization. Without forgetting its primary responsibility to its students, so far as it is able it serves the educational, social, and recreational needs of the entire population. Some rural schools go further and play a part in programs of general community improvement.

The modern school capitalizes students' out-of-school experiences and, through such devices as the organization of excursions, provides additional occasions for learning directly from the environment. The school program itself is rich in activities and opportunities for learning by doing. Students do not merely study about democracy; they are given experience in working with others and in democratic procedures. Similarly, the modern school encourages the development of good health habits instead of being content with teaching the value of health.

These new emphases in education manifest themselves in changes in school-community relations, the school program, instructional methods, and administrative procedures. Although many developments concern two or even more of these areas, they provide a convenient framework for the discussion of the specific things rural schools are doing to vitalize their work.

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

A close relationship between school and community is more readily attainable and more essential in the country than in the city. Yet in the past relatively few rural schools have participated actively or even taken a serious interest in the everyday affairs of their communities. The school has been isolated from life. Today that isolation is being rapidly broken down. The rural school is becoming what it should always have been—a key social institution contributing to and drawing upon the vitality of the community.

The school benefits in innumerable ways from being intimately related to the life of its social environment. Its very existence, the nature of the program it is able to offer, its freedom to initiate improvements, are all largely dependent on the support it receives from parents and public; and this support, in turn, depends upon community understanding of its purposes and methods. If this understanding is lacking, financial support of the schools is almost certain to be inadequate. Equally important, the children will absorb an attitude of indifference toward their school work and will not study with interest and zest. It has been found that parents' evaluation of education has an important influence in determining whether children will attend school at all. A recent study attributed the relatively low high-school enrolment in St. Charles County, Missouri, in large part to the negative attitude of many parents toward education. Numerous studies have shown that adult education programs usually have an important effect upon school enrolment, regularity of attendance, and the progress of pupils.

Close co-operation between school and community is important not only because of what the community can contribute to the school but also because of what the schools can contribute to the community. The rural school, the high school in particular, is strategi-

cally situated to become a center for "educational, recreational, and cultural aspects of community life." Its facilities are often more adequate than those of any other social institution. It has the opportunity to harness the immense energies of children and youth for socially useful purposes. To some extent at least most rural schools have recognized their community responsibilities. Literally thousands of rural high schools are providing some educational service for the out-of-school youth and adults of their communities. Many schools, it is true, offer only one or two courses, usually in vocational agriculture and home economics, but a substantial number have developed well-rounded educational programs. A few schools participate in many different community activities.

The programs of some community-minded schools.—The Lincoln Consolidated School, which is connected with the Michigan State Normal College at Ypsilanti, Michigan, attempts to serve the educational needs of parents as well as children in a sixty-square-mile attendance area. An adult citizenship league has been organized which takes the initiative in shaping and sponsoring the school's educational program for youth and adults. This is extraordinarily rich and varied, including not only general and vocational courses but also lectures and discussions on topics of contemporary interest. The school serves as a social and recreational, as well as an educational, center. It makes its facilities available for physical recreation, for dramatics, and for musical events. It fosters an interest in local history and each year sponsors a community festival. There are many tangible indications that the people of the area appreciate these services and are eager to do all they can for the school. The citizenship league, for example, has beautified and improved the school grounds and bought such things as draperies, musical instruments, and a silver service for the school.

The Newark Valley Central School, Newark Valley, New York, has an equally ambitious community program, and many of its activities are offered the year round. For example, the teacher of physical education stays on duty during the summer months to supervise the program of swimming and community sports. Eight students assist him as lifeguards. The band director gives one concert each week throughout the summer. Movies are shown each

Saturday night. The school nurse and the teachers of vocational agriculture, home economics, and piano are on duty some of the time during the summer. Either the supervising principal or the vice-principal is always on hand.

The Holtville, Alabama, High School engages in a number of economic activities for the benefit of its service area:

When it was found . . . that a fourth of the meat slaughtered in the county spoiled because of lack of refrigeration, Holtville High set up a slaughtering and refrigeration plant. [In 1940] students butchered and cured 50,000 lb. of local meat. When an expert declared that canning could add \$300 to the annual income of farm families, Holtville High set up a cannery.

Students do the canning as part of their regular school work. They also hatch and sell blood-tested chicks, contour-plow land, and spray peach trees, charging nominal sums for these services to cover the cost of needed equipment. Apart from their immediate practical benefit, such activities have large educational significance for both the youth who participate in them and their elders.

Here and there rural schools have found still other ways to serve their communities. The Department of Vocational Agriculture of the Ellerbe High School, Ellerbe, North Carolina, sponsors a co-operative produce market which has proved of substantial economic benefit to the farmers of the area. In addition, the market has undoubtedly made the work in vocational agriculture far more meaningful. Wholesale truckers are attracted to Ellerbe by an intensive advertising campaign. The teacher of agriculture works with participating farmers, by means of evening classes, to make certain that their products will be of high, uniform quality which will insure the market's success.

Other rural schools have served their communities by sponsoring clean-up drives or health campaigns. One or two alert schools have prodded their communities to improve housing conditions.

The role of the school in local planning.—Without slighting its educational function the modern rural school is doing whatever it can to improve the community—to ameliorate not only the cultural but also the social and economic condition of the people. It has become increasingly evident that the welfare of the school is inextricably linked with that of the community; the school cannot flourish if the

community it serves does not. This is so not only because the school needs the support of the community but because the community itself exerts important educational influences. Poverty, apathy, and ill-health delimit the effectiveness of the schools; unwholesome community conditions and attitudes of hostility or indifference to education on the part of adults nullify the value of what is taught there. The school cannot be unconcerned about the conditions which prevail in the community.

Local planning, which is discussed in chapter xv, provides a means by which the school can exercise its influence in improving the community. Local planning involves a mobilization of a community's people and agencies for a co-operative attack upon the community's problems, whether they concern health, recreation, the situation of youth, or agricultural conditions. Many rural schools are participating in local planning; a few have taken the initiative in sponsoring planning organizations.

Participation in local planning is a logical and, in a broad sense, a necessary extension of the activities of the modern rural school. The limitations of what the school can do must, however, be appreciated. Its main concern must be the welfare of the children it seeks to educate. Its resources, both of wealth and of personnel, are limited. No matter how enlightened and conscientious it may be, it cannot single-handedly remake its community. However, as a responsible social institution whose own effectiveness is largely dependent upon community conditions, the school can and should play a part in planned, democratic attempts to rehabilitate the community.

What the community can do for its schools.—If it is important that the school play an active part in community life, it is equally important that the community take an active interest in school affairs. The need for community understanding and support of the school program has already been stressed. In addition, the assistance of some organized adult group is often needed in connection with miscellaneous school services.

In rural areas the parent-teacher association is the most widely used agency for mobilizing the support of parents for the schools. Particularly when a school serves a natural social grouping, a neighborhood or sociological community, it is relatively easy to secure a

strong parent-teacher association with a real interest in its particular school. Obion County, Tennessee, is fortunate in having active parent-teacher associations for each of its twenty-seven schools. The average monthly attendance at P.-T.A. meetings is twelve hundred, including men as well as women. Five of the twenty-seven presidents are men. The Obion County P.-T.A.'s perform many specific services for the schools. For example, they show movies to educate the community to the value of school health examinations. Parent-Teacher Association members individually inform the parents of preschool children of the date set for their examinations and when necessary arrange transportation for the children to the centers where the examinations are made. If the parents are unable to do so, the P.-T.A.'s pay for needed medical and dental work. When necessary they furnish clothing and schoolbooks to children. Both by serving as voluntary assistants and by financial contributions, they help make it possible for the schools to serve hot lunches for a few cents or, if a child cannot pay, for nothing. In addition to performing such services, they have mobilized community sentiment for an enriched educational program.

The parent-teacher association is not the only agency through which active community support of the schools may be enlisted. The adult citizenship league of the Lincoln Consolidated School has already been mentioned. Two small towns in Connecticut organized community councils of parents and outstanding citizens to make possible a rich program of summer activities for children. Each member volunteered to lead a group in some area in which he was skilled or to secure a competent leader. The leaders not only donated their services but provided meeting places—in most cases their own homes. It was possible to plan for groups of children in art, pottery, woodwork, nature study, music, sewing, story-telling, dramatics, first aid, games, swimming, camping, hiking, and gardening. Each child joined the group whose activity interested him most.

THE EMERGING RURAL SCHOOL PROGRAM

Many forces are converging to change the educational program of the rural school. Among them is the desire, felt by American schools generally, to serve the diverse needs of the increased number

of children attending school and to prepare them for a complex and rapidly changing environment, for an increased amount of leisure, for the difficulty of obtaining jobs, and for the possibility that those jobs may be poor in opportunities for satisfaction. Rural elementary schools in which a single teacher instructs two or more grades have a special need for a new curriculum organization which will keep the day from being chopped up into a great number of disconnected class periods. Small rural high schools face unusual difficulties in offering a broad program and serving the needs of the four different student groups mentioned in chapter ii—those who will live on farms, those who will settle in villages, those who will migrate to cities, and those who will go on to college.

In response to these pressures, the program of rural schools is gradually changing. It is not to be pretended that the changes represent a perfect adaptation to the conditions of today. For this there are two essential explanations. As John Dewey has pointed out, "At the present time education has no great directive aim. . . . It expands by piecemeal additions, not by the movement of a vital force within. The schools, like the nation, are in need of a central purpose . . . which will unify and guide all intellectual plans." Second, the reform of the rural school curriculum is clearly in process and not anywhere near completion. The changes which have been made represent gropings rather than any systematically planned and perfectly implemented alteration. But they are gropings in the direction of a more realistic, meaningful, and effective type of education.

The child's interests and the school program.—A pervasive change in the rural school program which affects all subjects and sometimes breaks down the traditional form of subject organization altogether is the increased attention being given to the local environment and contemporary problems. This change must be sharply distinguished from the attempt made earlier in the century, following the report of the Country Life Commission appointed by Theodore Roosevelt, to "ruralize" the curriculum, to restrict students to the sort of education which would be of immediate practical utility in their particular environment. Today elements common to city and country life are receiving attention and the broad general objectives of education are not being forgotten. The modern rural school is concerned that its

students acquire the basic knowledge and fundamental skills they will need in any environment. But, so far as practicable, it encourages them to secure that knowledge and develop those skills while investigating problems whose importance they perceive. A considerable body of objective evidence indicates that students work harder under this new approach and that what is learned is more meaningful and better remembered. As old as Plato is the realization that "knowledge which is acquired under compulsion has no hold upon the mind."

Some typical themes on which the work of the school may be based are the child's relationship to his family, the natural environment, occurrences in the community, the school lunch hour, and the child's experiences outside of school. Many Connecticut schools stress the importance of considering what the child does all twelve months of the year. When the student returns to school in the fall, the summer activities which are still fresh and vivid in his mind are used as a taking-off point for discussion, papers, and class work.

Mathematical problems arise naturally in a rural environment in connection with farming and many of the child's own activities. Planting, harvesting, transporting goods, and planning a play field or a trip all involve arithmetic. Problems of health, hygiene, and sanitation occur at school in connection with the school lunch and drinking and toilet facilities. In Iowa, which is in a land-tenure reform period, many rural schools have harnessed student interest in the question by considering problems which arise in connection with tenancy.

Taking the classroom into the community.—Not only is the community being brought into the classroom but the classroom is being brought into the community. Modern rural schools utilize the educational resources of the community, the places, people, and institutions capable of affording children valuable firsthand learning experiences. Classes in many Wisconsin schools go out and see how local government functions. In groups or individually, rural students visit farms and businesses of unusual interest. Many rural schools encourage their students to talk with leaders in the community—men and women who have traveled widely, professional people, persons who are successful and expert in some particular

field. Pupils are also encouraged to take advantage of the cultural resources—objects of historical interest, homes notable for architectural design or style of furnishings—found in the community. Finally, the modern rural school recognizes the natural environment as an invaluable source of educational experiences. By leaving the schoolhouse and surveying the surrounding countryside, students, from direct observation, can learn about geography, soil erosion, and plant and animal life.

Exploiting the educational resources of the community must not be thought of as exclusively a classroom procedure. Useful facts and skills are often acquired through performing service activities for the community. Many rural schools have made surveys to obtain information which was wanted in connection with local planning, in the process acquiring techniques of the greatest value to themselves. Schools participate in and sometimes initiate community projects. In the Brink School, a four-room school in Greensville County, Virginia, pupils became interested in the arbutus. Impressed with the ease with which the entire plant may be destroyed when its flowers are carelessly picked, they began to study and classify other flowers with respect to whether they should be picked freely or carefully and sparingly. This led to making a nature trail, complete with markers on various trees and flowers. The children became interested in beautifying their surroundings and transplanted flowers, shrubs, and trees from a near-by woods to the school grounds. The improvement they effected made them conscious of the ugliness of their school-rooms, and they set to work to beautify these also. By this time parents and other citizens in the community had become so interested in what the children were doing that they not only co-operated with them to the full but began a general community clean-up and improvement program.

While this project grew out of the children's interest in their immediate environment, it gave them knowledge and insights which will be valuable to them wherever they may live. They learned how to co-operate both with children of their own age and with adults and how to win the interest of others in what they were doing. While studying flowers and making a nature trail, they increased their knowledge of elementary science. In connection with their work,

they read and wrote stories, drew pictures, made posters and wall charts, made flower boxes, performed scientific experiments, and studied drainage and soil conservation.

The reorganization of the elementary school.—In many rural elementary schools the curriculum is being transformed by attempts to decrease the importance of subject and grade divisions. Whatever the merits of the traditional form of school organization which divides the children into numerous grades and the curriculum into hard-and-fast subject-matter fields, it has distinct disadvantages for small rural schools. It divides the children attending a one-room, open-country school into innumerable small groups, although they may particularly need to develop the poise and social attitudes which come from working with others. There is no reason in the nature of things why such a form or organization should prevail; it is a recent and urban development. In recent years the experiences of an increasing number of schools demonstrate that it is possible to secure an organization far better suited to the conditions of the small school.

In some schools this new form of organization is based on combination and alternation of grades. For example, Grades III and IV may be grouped together, as may be Grades V and VI and Grades VII and VIII. The third-, fifth-, and seventh-grade work is then covered one year and the fourth-, sixth-, and eighth-grade work the next. A difficulty of the arrangement is that children entering school in certain years must take up, say, fourth-grade work before they have passed through the third grade. Proponents of the plan point out, however, that there is no "right" order in which subject-matter topics need be considered; it does not so much matter whether one studies subtraction or multiplication first. Furthermore, adjustments can be made for the differences in age and previous schooling among the students of a single class by such devices as giving the younger children special help and the older ones more difficult assignments. The plan permits more effective teaching because it puts students in larger classes and gives them more recitation time and because it reduces the number of lesson preparations for the teacher and gives her more time for individual pupil work.

Another relatively new form of organization tends to do away with subject-matter divisions and builds the school program around proj-

ects or units which typically are broad in scope. Under this arrangement, too, children are usually divided into the two, three, or four groups into which they naturally fall rather than into eight grades. Sometimes all the groups pursue a single project, just as people of different ages and ability co-operate on matters of common concern outside the school, each contributing whatever he can. Certain problems arise in working out this form of organization, too, but they are being successfully solved. For example, it is necessary to provide for individual instruction in the tool subjects, especially for beginners, and to plan units which are as far as possible self-contained rather than dependent upon preceding material which some pupils may not have had.

The state of Virginia has now developed a curriculum in which study in each grade is organized around eleven major functions of social life. West Virginia, Texas, Arkansas, and other states have developed programs centered around a smaller number of topics. The Winecoff Elementary School, Concord, North Carolina, is typical of many individual schools which are attempting to integrate subjects as far as is practicable. Here, too, the work is organized around units, which may take a few days, a semester, or the entire year to cover. Some units are developed around subject matter, including, however, work from two or more fields; others are based upon the children's experiences and interests. The school day is divided not into a study of this and that subject but into a work or activity period, a reports and discussion period, a reading period, etc.

The schools of Washington County, Wisconsin, build their entire program around projects and have done away with grade as well as subject-matter divisions. The students in each individual school plan their own projects, which center about such topics as safety, unemployment, the sugar-beet industry, banking, the parcel-post system, and means of transportation.

Changes in more traditional schools.—Though the majority of rural schools still maintain the traditional form of subject organization, their program, too, is changing. Many schools with a basically orthodox program provide for a certain number of activity units, and these usually cut across subject-matter divisions and sometimes grade divisions as well. The trend toward integration makes itself

felt in the combining of subjects—for example, in the elementary school, in the combination of geography, history, and civics into a well-balanced social studies course and, in the high school, in the combination of ancient, medieval, and modern history into one world-history course.

Important changes are also being made in the degree of attention given various subjects. In general, the fields gaining in importance are the social studies, vocational education, the natural and general elementary sciences, health and physical education, family life and relations, music, art, conservation of human and natural resources, and safety education. Foreign languages and mathematics are losing ground.

An examination of both recommended state courses of instruction and the programs of individual schools reveals the increased attention being paid to the social studies. In one survey of village high schools it was found that in 1936 nearly all of them offered courses in these studies, whereas in 1930 less than half had offered such courses. No one who is aware of the need for an understanding of the particular social and economic forces which affect the lives of rural youth will question the desirability of this new emphasis.

The growing attention being given to vocational preparation is equally noteworthy. The entire subject of vocational education and the individual programs offered in home economics and a number of occupational fields will be discussed in chapter vi. However, the desire to prepare children for their work and family responsibilities affects many aspects of the rural school program. Units on vocations or family relationships are often worked into the traditional subject-matter courses. Perhaps one rural high school in twenty offers, apart from the home-economics program, a special course in family relations. Typically, sex education is one important objective of such a course, which may cover social, economic, and biological aspects of family life, home planning, child psychology, and infant care. Finally, some rural schools have special pupil guidance programs, to be described in chapter v, which provide help with personal and occupational adjustment.

Other subjects receiving increased emphasis.—Music and, to a lesser extent, art are also being increasingly stressed in rural schools. These

are subjects which will equip students to enjoy the increased amount of leisure which technological progress is making possible. Many educators feel that music is of particular importance in rural areas where people are dependent largely on their own resources for diversion. Group music has an important socializing influence. The Washington state school survey points out that musical education has a vocational value for certain students. Not only is music receiving increased attention in the curriculum but it is an important center of extra-curriculum activity. In Missouri rural schools alone, about one thousand bands and rhythmic activity groups have been organized.

One of the most obviously appropriate changes in the program of the rural school is the increased emphasis being placed on conservation. The means of bringing conservation into the educational program vary considerably, but most rural schools now attempt, in one way or another, to make their students appreciate the importance of protecting the nation's natural resources. Attention is being paid not only to soil, forests, and grasslands but also to wild life, to minerals and oil, and even to scenic beauty.

Early attempts to teach conservation were often unsuccessful because teachers knew little about the subject and because practically no suitable material was available either for teachers or for children. Today courses in conservation are offered in 138 teacher preparatory institutions located in thirty-five states. Many states, such as Tennessee, hold meetings and provide helpful written material for teachers in service. With the co-operation of other governmental agencies, the United States Office of Education issues booklets on the teaching of conservation, some of them of marked excellence.

There are equally promising developments with respect to the provision of curriculum materials on conservation. Tennessee is co-operating with George Peabody College in the preparation of such material suitable for children of all grade levels. In the Pacific Northwest a private agency financed by the Rockefeller Foundation, the Northwest Regional Council, is preparing materials on both natural resources and regional problems. One of its cardinal objectives is "to reduce the lag between the occurrence of important social situations and their treatment in the classroom." In addition

to preparing curriculum materials, the Council sponsors winter and summer conferences for teachers in various educational institutions in the Northwest. A National Commission on Resources and Education, with the same general purposes as the Northwest Regional Council, has recently been organized.

Health (to be discussed in chap. ix) and safety are two other subjects which are receiving increased emphasis in modern rural schools. It has already been mentioned that some rural schools have made safety the theme of special projects. Others stress safety in connection with regular school subjects or organize clubs to encourage students to take more responsibility for their physical welfare. In Connecticut a second-grade class made a large floor map of their village upon which the children marked the routes they took to school. Dangerous intersections were pointed out and the need of walking on sidewalks and crossing streets carefully was emphasized.

Exploiting the educational possibilities of activities.—Class work does not constitute the entire program of the modern rural school. Student activities and organizations are encouraged, and full advantage is taken of the educational possibilities of play periods and the school lunch hour. In many schools this hour is made an occasion for the development of desirable social attitudes, the practice of conversation, instruction in cleanliness and health, and practical experience in achieving beauty and attractiveness. Fixing up a school lunchroom or corner has been a valuable project in many rural schools.

School organizations and activities not only make school work more interesting but contribute to the achievement of many important educational objectives. For example, they provide opportunities for exploration of interests, social experience, and community service; they stimulate the desire for self-expression; frequently they help to enlist the interest of parents in the school. The Knighthood of Youth clubs in Nebraska elementary schools attempt to give children a greater sense of responsibility in planning their own school program. It is believed that they may study more eagerly, attend school more regularly, and be better prepared for their responsibilities in a democratic society as a result of having a voice in deciding upon the work they are to do.

Many rural high schools offer their students a wide range of extra-curriculum activities. The program in the Newark Valley Central School is unusually complete, including:

Athletics

Social dancing

Art clubs

Camera Club

College Club (for students who intend to go to college)

Discussion group on world-affairs

Dramatic and Radio Club

Hook and Needle Club

Library Club

Model Building clubs

Cardinal staff (the student newspaper)

News staff (interested in collecting news for neighborhood papers)

Yearbook staff

Orchestra

Senior Band

Hill-Billy Band

In addition, the school has a 4-H club and a Future Farmers of America club. The work of these organizations will be discussed in chapter vi. Many rural schools also make the activities of such organizations as the Boy and Girl Scouts an integral part of their extra-curriculum program.

Broadening the program of the small high school.—Small rural high schools with initiative and ingenuity are offering their students a broader program than might at first seem possible, in view of the limited size of their teaching staffs. The trend toward integration of subjects is of particular benefit to the small high school, since it permits a measure of variety without having numerous classes and without overloading its teachers with preparations. Additionally, however, many small schools employ special devices to broaden their programs.

One of these is alternation of subjects, which permits more courses to be offered over a span of years. Typically, alternations are arranged in two-year cycles. Careful planning and student guidance are necessary if alternation is to work out satisfactorily. Students

must be given a clear idea of graduation and college-entrance requirements and should know when the courses they need are to be offered.

A second device is for a group of schools to join in the employment of a teacher for a course they could not afford individually to offer. Joint employment of such circuit teachers is used by many small schools in such areas as vocational agriculture, the practical arts, music, speech, and dramatics.

In Nebraska and some other states rural schools are experimenting with individual instruction in subjects not offered in their regular program. The material on which the instruction is based is prepared in a state center. It is largely self-administered; that is, "the pupil is so guided that he can progress from one phase of the work to the next with a minimum of teacher assistance." Self-testing devices are supplied, for example, to enable the student to tell whether he has mastered a given body of material. A single teacher can simultaneously supervise the work of pupils in many different courses.

The role of supervised correspondence study.—Perhaps the most valuable of all the special devices for broadening the educational program is supervised correspondence study, which is used by hundreds of rural high schools, small and large. It permits a school to offer many courses, from which adaptations can be made for the special interests and abilities of all pupils. Correspondence study requires a minimum of supervision; the material itself may be more nearly self-administered than that used in individual instruction, and papers are graded and tests given by the correspondence study center. The supervising teacher in the school has only to work out a definite study schedule with the student, help him over temporary difficulties, and see that he works steadily and profitably under conditions favorable to study.

A survey made by the United States Office of Education in 1933 revealed that there are publicly controlled institutions in thirty-two states offering high-school correspondence courses. In addition, some courses of satisfactory character are available from privately controlled correspondence schools. By 1933 high schools in thirty-two states had experimented with the use of correspondence courses, and the evidence indicates that the number of schools using the

method has since increased. In North Dakota, which has had its program for only four years, four hundred high schools—two-thirds of all those in the state—are now using supervised correspondence study. Student enrolment has climbed from 2,087 to 6,132.

It should be mentioned in passing that supervised correspondence study has many other uses besides making possible an increased number of offerings in the high school. In North Dakota it is extensively used for the instruction of disabled children and youth who live far away from any high school. The study of this latter group is supervised in the nearest elementary school; the disabled children are supervised in their homes. The nation over, correspondence courses are being taken by increasing numbers of out-of-school youth of high-school age, by high-school graduates who cannot afford to go to college, and by adults. Work Projects Administration correspondence courses are also now available for youth in isolated regions who find it impossible to attend high school and for adults who cannot afford to avail themselves of existing educational facilities.

Obstacles to the improvement of the high-school program.—In view of the unsuitability of the traditional academic curriculum for the vast majority of rural high-school students who do not go on to college, it may be wondered why there is not a more fundamental, rapid, and widespread reform of the secondary-school program. The limited resources of the small rural high school, of course, obstruct improvement, but there are two additional important reasons for the slowness with which changes are being made. The first is the attitude of many parents and school-board members that the one program which spells opportunity for their children is the traditional college preparatory curriculum. The values of a different type of education have not yet been convincingly presented to the American public.

The requirements of state and regional accrediting agencies and college-entrance requirements are also retarding reform. Many high schools are afraid to depart too far from the traditional academic curriculum because their accrediting is largely dependent upon the quality of their work in preparing students for college entrance. Some timidity is evident even with regard to minor departures. Although an increasing number of accrediting agencies and colleges

accept credits earned through supervised correspondence courses, a survey of high-school instruction by mail concludes that "the whole question of credits has more than anything else retarded the use of such lessons by high schools."

However, in the opinion of the Committee on Small High Schools in Wisconsin, the small high school can both adopt a more functional program and prepare those students who are going on to college. The Committee recommends a program individualized to a very large extent to the needs of each student with recitations giving way to work-study periods in which, individually or in groups, students pursue their own particular objectives. Schools adopting this recommendation face no difficulty in serving the needs of students who expect to enter college. Small schools that keep the traditional course organization can liberalize their curriculum and give college preparatory students whatever additional academic units they may need through individual instruction and correspondence study.

NEW EMPHASES IN INSTRUCTION

The same ferment which is responsible for the reshaping of the educational program has led to noteworthy improvements in the instructional methods of the modern rural school. Some of these have already been suggested by the preceding discussion.

The "listening" school, where the teacher methodically hears recitations throughout the school day, is gradually being supplanted by a school whose program places more emphasis on projects and activities. A typical project provides opportunity for many types of experiences—reading, planning with the teacher and with other pupils, talking to people, making things, solving problems which arise, seeing and drawing pictures. The teacher in the modern school is not a taskmaster but a guide—a consultant who helps children with their investigations and in the process stimulates their thinking and widens their interests.

Children are given an increased share of responsibility in the modern school, but not more than they demonstrate the ability to accept. To the extent that their age, knowledge, and previous experience permit, they are given a voice in planning the work of the school. They have considerably more freedom of movement. At least at

certain periods they may be encouraged to move around the school-room and consult with one another. School work is less an individual and more a social undertaking. Student responsibility often extends to planning the playground program and maintaining order there.

Those familiar with the work of modern rural schools agree that the extension of more responsibility to students is seldom abused. Frequently it results, as it did in the rural schools of Saginaw County, Michigan, in a marked reduction of disciplinary problems, playground fights, and damage to school property. Children work more industriously when they have a share in planning their own program, because what they are doing has meaning for them. Although the focus of the kind of instruction which characterizes the modern rural school is on developing the child, standard tests given in many places show that it generally leads to a superior mastery of subject-matter content and skills as well.

Activities and books in the modern school.—Activities occupy a highly important place in the program of the modern school. The Ellerbe School in Ellerbe, North Carolina, a state characterized by low per-pupil expenditures, has a school store; a nursery for plants, from which not only the school but churches, industrial plants, and homes have been beautified; playground equipment made by the students; a cabin built for social meetings; a library of twelve thousand volumes, collected and cared for by the students; an art collection of a hundred and fifty fine prints distributed in the various classrooms; a school paper; and a print shop. Modern schools provide opportunities for aesthetic expression and for making things. They include in their program frequent excursions not only into the community, as has been mentioned, but occasionally to distant points. These excursions are carefully planned for the achievement of educational objectives, but they are enjoyed by the pupils.

The instructional methods of the modern rural school put books in a different, but no less important, role. Recitative teaching inevitably made textbooks the final—sometimes the only—authority on any question. Unit teaching organized around problems leads the students to consult many books and to become aware of difference of opinion on many important questions. In the rural school of today

books are tools of learning, useful because they give students ideas and information for the formulation of their own viewpoint.

Visual aids and the radio.—Rural schools as a group have not made extensive use of such important teaching aids as visual materials and the radio. Visual teaching aids, which are useful both as means of reinforcing spoken and printed words and as sources of additional information, include everything from the traditional schoolroom globe to motion pictures. Prominent among the visual aids used with some frequency in rural schools are pictures clipped from newspapers and magazines, collections of natural objects, such as birds' nests and wild flowers, and exhibits of cultural objects such as Indian arrowheads. Rural schools have lagged behind urban schools in the use of slides and film strips, largely because of difficulties in obtaining them. Now some ways of overcoming these difficulties have been devised. A recent Kansas curriculum bulletin, at the end of each unit of study, gives a bibliography of visual aids, which greatly facilitates ordering. In Snohomish County, Washington, a library of visual aids is being built up in the office of the county superintendent. The schools in the Fifth Supervisory District, Cattaraugus County, New York—one large central school, four two-teacher schools, and twenty-four one-teacher schools—have organized an Educational Service Bureau which purchases material for their collective use. The office of the district superintendent, which is in the one large school in the district and, fortunately, centrally located, serves as headquarters for the Bureau. While a collection of textbooks in all elementary-school subject-matter fields and a teachers' professional library have been built up, attention is focused largely upon the acquisition and use of visual aids and equipment. Teachers themselves assume a great deal of responsibility both in selecting the equipment and pictures which are to be purchased and in scheduling and planning their use. All the teachers have been taught how to operate the projectors and use other equipment.

The use of the radio as an aid to teaching in rural schools is still in the experimental stage. It is already clear, however, that the radio may prove of special value to rural education. Radios are inexpensive and within the means of even small rural schools. They bridge space and bring the specialist and the great artist into the remotest school. One study found that the radio markedly increases the num-

ber and intensity of rural children's interests. It stimulates their interest in national and international affairs and acquaints them with many different points of view. Broadcasts add interest, excitement, and variety to the rural school program. They are of invaluable assistance in fostering appreciation of music.

Rural schools occasionally tune in not only on such special educational broadcasts as the "N.B.C. Music Appreciation Hour," conducted by Walter Damrosch, but also on regular programs which happen to tie up with class work. They make even more extensive use of university and state department of instruction broadcasts which are specifically designed to supplement the work of the schools in states where such broadcasts are available. In Wisconsin and one or two other states some of these broadcasts are specially adapted for rural schools, but even when they are intended for general school use they are often of particular value in rural areas.

Many problems are involved in the educational use of radio broadcasts. It is often difficult for a class to find material which is exactly suitable. To be of maximum value a broadcast must be carefully made, integrated with the school program, and followed up with discussion and, when possible, some kind of activity. Adjustment of the class work to fit the broadcast schedules is not always easy. The radio offers rural schools too many advantages, however, for them to be deterred from its use by such difficulties. In rural homes, too, the radio is of special value as an educational instrument for both children and adults.

SOME MODERN ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES

Improved administrative procedures are making an important contribution not only to efficient operation of rural schools but to the breadth, flexibility, and effectiveness of the school program. The organization of elementary-school work into large units which cut across grade and subject-matter lines, while discussed in connection with the improvement of the educational program, also represents an administrative achievement. Similarly, the alternation of subjects in the small high school, the use of supervised correspondence study, and the joint employment of teachers are all examples of more resourceful and imaginative administrative procedures.

Many further examples of improved administrative procedure in

rural schools could be cited. Many methods have been devised, for example, to enable a group of rural schools to offer an educational service beyond the means of any one of them. An instance would be the program of speech improvement of Sonoma County, California, which compares favorably with the program of many wealthy city schools. The county school nurse made a complete health examination of each child in the rural schools included in the program. A speech supervisor then made an individual speech diagnosis of each child based on a test in reading ability, consideration of home language and family background, and a check on the physical condition of the speech mechanism, eyedness, handedness, and the presence of mirror vision. The survey gave the schoolteachers a more detailed knowledge of their pupils than they could have obtained by themselves and stimulated them to further study of health, reading, and speech problems. It led to the establishment of extension classes in speech improvement, enrichment of the reading program, and the correlation of speech with music and literature.

Flexibility in advancement and reports of progress.—Some rural school administrators are attempting to achieve a type of school organization which will permit each child to advance at his own rate, so that he will neither be forced too rapidly by those who are quicker nor held back by those who are slower. In the Rutland-Castleton-Fairhaven supervisory union in Vermont, advancement is dependent on the attainment of basic objectives which are set for each course. When a pupil has attained all the objectives of a given course, he begins the next grade's work in that subject, regardless of his progress in other courses. Through guidance, however, pupils are stimulated to spend more time on subjects in which they are making slow progress so that, in practice, many pupils are advanced from one grade to another in several subjects at the same time. The variation which does exist in the rate of progress of different children does not cause any special difficulty. Instruction in the tool subjects is on an individual basis. Units in other subjects are organized, as far as practicable, so that they need not be taken up in any given sequence. Thus a just-promoted pupil can take up the work at any point.

The Rutland-Castleton-Fairhaven supervisory union and many other rural elementary schools have abandoned the conventional

type of report card in favor of a report which is more informative and less likely to breed unfavorable competition. Instead of giving grades, a typical modern report card will indicate the progress the pupil is making toward the attainment of personal and instructional goals. Thus the emphasis is on self-improvement and the pupil's development, not on his comparative standing. In keeping with the interest of the modern school in every phase of the child's growth, information about his scholastic progress is supplemented by comments on his mental and physical health, his work habits, his attitudes and personality traits, and his social efficiency. To foster a close relationship between school and home, some cards contain a statement about the school program and invite parental comments about the child and his activities. Here and there a school has abandoned report cards altogether and substituted occasional informal notes or individual conferences with parents.

Tie-ups with federal agencies.—Many rural school administrators have been alert in making tie-ups with federal agencies to better school conditions. In providing hot lunches for students, the co-operation of as many as three agencies is sometimes enlisted. The Surplus Marketing Administration may contribute some of the food, people assigned by the Work Projects Administration may prepare it, and students receiving assistance under the National Youth Administration student work program may serve the lunch.

National Youth Administration students perform many services of value in rural schools, and grants made under the N.Y.A. student work program, small as they are (averaging less than five dollars a month), have had a significant effect upon rural school attendance. Many rural school buildings have been erected or improved by N.Y.A. work projects for needy out-of-school youth. As is well known, rural school administrators have also received grants, loans, and relief labor from the Public Works Administration and the Work Projects Administration for construction, repairs, and improvements. Some rural schools have also utilized the services of W.P.A. recreation leaders.

Many rural schools have displayed ingenuity in improving their buildings and grounds without outside assistance and at very small cost. In some places, as at the Brink School, pupils participate in

projects to make the school more attractive. Rural schools are making an increasing proportion of their own school furniture, usually in connection with regular shop work courses.

Adjusting the school to the needs of its students.—South Carolina and some other states have state-wide textbook rental systems, and here and there local school administrators have developed similar arrangements. In Tennessee, where texts are furnished free for only the first three grades, Sue M. Powers, county superintendent of rural schools in Shelby County, found that in the other grades children were often late about purchasing their books or could not afford to buy them at all. She therefore decided that the administrative unit should purchase enough texts for all pupils and rent them out. Rentals are not difficult to set because textbooks are subject to change in Tennessee only once in five years.

One final instance of flexible and realistic administrative procedure might be cited—the practice of adjusting the school schedule to local work conditions. Where rural schools hold to a schedule set for the needs of urban schools, attendance inevitably suffers during periods when children help more than they ordinarily do with the work of the farm. Today many rural schools arrange their schedule so that school is not in session at planting and harvesting time and on marketing days. In many areas of the South, for example, school begins in the middle of summer and is discontinued for several weeks at cotton-picking time. In some regions where Friday is marketing day and many children accompany their parents to town, classes are held on Saturday rather than on Friday. Similarly, in areas characterized by a high rate of tenancy and a mobile population, the school year often begins after “moving day,” January 1, so that the children of tenant farmers will not have to change schools in the middle of a term.

AUTHORITIES FOR THE FACTS

This chapter is based not only on a great many different publications but on correspondence with educators at the local, state, and federal levels and on personal visits to rural schools in many parts of the country. Thus no single source can be cited for many statements. The generalizations, in particular, must stand or fall on the basis of their own inherent soundness. The most useful single reference was:

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CHAPTER V

GUIDANCE: HELPING YOUTH MAKE PERSONAL SOCIAL, AND OCCUPATIONAL ADJUSTMENTS

IN ADDITION to influencing the vitalization of the curriculum, the increased emphasis upon the needs of children has led to the development of special services aimed at helping students make satisfactory personal, social, and occupational adjustments. It is these special guidance services which will be considered in this chapter.

Although guidance is being separately discussed, it is an integral part of the educational program of the modern school. Through its own special practices and techniques it seeks the same goals which dominate general education. Guidance has been defined by the United States Office of Education as "the process of helping the individual discover, and use, his natural endowment, in addition to special training obtained from any source, so that he may make his living, and live, to the best advantage to himself and to society." Obviously, this definition might be applied to education itself, from which, strictly speaking, guidance cannot be "divorced." In the modern school, classroom work, as well as guidance, attempts to give the student insight into his abilities and help in developing them; it, too, is concerned that he make the best personal, social, and occupational adjustment of which he is capable.

In view of the importance and scope of these goals it is essential that every phase of the school program be pointed toward their attainment. Unless guidance and class instruction work hand-in-glove, neither can be fully effective. The Breathitt County High School, in Breathitt County, Kentucky, found that it could make no real headway with its work in guidance until it adopted a curriculum keyed to the same general objectives.

Just as guidance is being discussed by itself though it must be integrated with the rest of the educational program, so two types of guidance are considered separately for purposes of convenience,

though they are interlocked and should both receive attention in a satisfactory guidance program. The first is concerned with the student's personal and social adjustment; the second, vocational guidance, with his future occupational adjustment, his choice of and preparation for a career. Because many rural schools have found it necessary, in the main, to restrict themselves to one type of guidance or the other, or have emphasized personal-social adjustment and vocational adjustment at different times, it is convenient to separate the two types of guidance in reporting present guidance programs. But—although it may be desirable to concentrate on one phase of guidance for a time—so interdependent are personal-social and vocational guidance that no program can neglect one or the other without jeopardizing its own objectives. The proper choice of an occupation plays an important part in determining one's personal happiness and social contribution; and personal integration and the ability to work with people affect vocational success.

The two types of guidance are further bound together by a mutual concern with the student's educational program. Educational counseling is an integral part of guidance, whether its emphasis at the moment is on occupational or on personal and social adjustment.

The provision of guidance in rural schools.—According to a recent sample survey made by the United States Office of Education, only a small number of rural high schools are doing organized work in guidance. Beyond any question the difficulties rural schools face in providing special guidance service are very great. Nearly half of all rural high schools, it will be remembered, enrol fewer than a hundred pupils. Most rural schools are too poor to employ a special guidance counselor. Fortunately, as will be seen, it is possible to do excellent work without a special counselor or with one counselor serving a number of schools. Rural high schools, furthermore, have certain advantages in furnishing guidance. Their small size permits teachers to become well acquainted with the individual students. The relative simplicity of the rural social structure makes it easier to secure the background data so essential for understanding the boys and girls they teach.

Though the number of rural schools doing work in guidance is small, an increasing amount of the work being done is excellent.

Many of these schools, it is true, are unusually large and well staffed. Their programs, however, can readily be adapted to the requirements of smaller schools. Furthermore, as chapter iii brought out, rural high schools are growing larger, and administrative units are increasing in size, paving the way for the joint employment of guidance counselors by groups of schools. It is hoped, therefore, that this account will be of value to the many schools, small and large, which are interested in initiating a guidance program or extending their present guidance activities. The need for guidance is at least as great in the country as in the city, and the responsibility of the school for furnishing it is as undeniable. "The school experience advances the child intellectually, emotionally and physically. Inherent in the nature of this process is the obligation to give direction to that advancement."

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL GUIDANCE

As may be seen from the statement of objectives, guidance programs which are primarily concerned with the student's personal and social adjustment vary somewhat in their approach and emphasis. Three objectives are set for the guidance program of Saginaw County, Michigan: (1) a better understanding and a more intensive study of child growth and development in order to help every child to improve his daily living; (2) a study of the causes of truancy and the out-of-school factors which affect child development; and (3) a better understanding of behavior problems and guidance in the adjustment of these problems.

Largely on the basis of actual practice in the six high schools in Carroll and Frederick counties, Maryland, the following list of the objectives of school and social guidance was compiled: (1) orientation to social surroundings in the school environment; (2) individual counseling as a means to self-evaluation and better social adjustments; (3) development of a feeling of participation and co-operation with others; (4) cultivation of leadership among those who show the necessary capabilities and of "followership" among those who do not; (5) building school spirit and loyalty; (6) encouragement of planning in personal life; (7) stimulation of interest in public affairs; and (8) interesting youth in the development of personality.

Of course, no one of the schools emphasizes all these objectives. Because of limited resources, many rural schools now find it necessary to concentrate on some one or two aspects of guidance. For example, a number confine themselves to educational guidance—to helping students decide on the courses and activities which will best develop their particular abilities and accord with their future plans.

Securing and recording information about students.—Conscientious guidance work is always based upon a careful study of children—as a group and as individuals. The Spring Hope School, in North Carolina, one of the relatively few rural elementary schools which is guidance conscious, utilizes personal interviews and conferences with parents and pupils, questionnaires, observations, aptitude and intelligence tests, and a school census in its effort to understand the capacities and needs of each of its pupils. Not even all secondary schools engaged in guidance are able to make such elaborate studies. But it is generally agreed that to be of maximum value to the student the guidance counselor or teacher adviser should know as much as possible about him. Efforts must be made to secure pertinent information about the child's preschool life and his development during the elementary-school, as well as the high-school, years. The North Wildwood, New Jersey, Junior High School and many other rural secondary schools with guidance programs make a point of obtaining as much data as possible about their students from tributary elementary schools. It is also important that the subjective impressions of the guidance counselor, teachers, and parents be supplemented and corrected by the objective information supplied by tests. Arrangements have now been devised in various parts of the country which enable small schools to give a wide variety of tests. For example, the University of Tennessee supplies and scores tests for the high schools of the state.

So that all the information about each student can be conveniently accumulated and used, individual student records are kept by all schools with organized guidance programs. It is obvious that such records can be of great value in understanding and guiding students. The records kept by some schools provide information about the health, personality, special interests, and abilities of each student as well as about his intellectual development. Other schools, those in

Breathitt County, Kentucky, for example, also secure detailed information about his home living conditions and the economic and social status of his family. Ideally, a record can give a complete picture of a child's development. Without minimizing the value of records, however, it must be emphasized that they are merely tools of guidance, not ends in themselves. A few rural schools keep very elaborate records without utilizing them fruitfully. Other schools, where teachers have a thorough firsthand knowledge of the students and a deep interest in them, are doing some excellent work in guidance despite the meagerness of their records. Most rural schools doing work in guidance have been compelled by limitations of time and personnel to develop record systems which are at once reasonably adequate and easy to maintain.

Counseling—heart of the guidance program.—The heart of any guidance program is counseling—the give-and-take consideration of the student's problems by the student and an older person, either a teacher or a special guidance counselor. Since many problems are common to all or many students, a great deal of guidance is furnished through group counseling in classes and home rooms, through club work, and through meetings with a teacher or counselor of a number of pupils having similar problems. In addition, however, guidance-conscious rural schools always provide for individual conferences in which careful, confidential consideration is given to the student's personal situation. A certain number of conferences—generally one to three in the course of a school year—are scheduled; others may be arranged on the initiative of the student. Every teacher who has had the experience of encouraging a pupil to talk about his problems knows how valuable such conferences can be. The interest of a sympathetic adult may not only help the pupil to solve particular problems which trouble him but may also give him added confidence in himself and lead to improvement in his general work and behavior.

It is interesting to note the sort of problems about which pupils voluntarily seek advice in individual interviews. In the Breathitt County High School the questions most frequently raised during a recent year centered around education: the desirability of finishing high school, the choice of school subjects, the advisability of going to college. Others dealt with stumbling blocks to school attendance:

the attitude of parents or brothers and sisters, the desire or need to work, the problem of securing suitable clothes for school, the difficulty of getting to school on time because of chores and inadequate transportation. Questions even more personal were raised—about conduct, self-consciousness, misunderstandings with teachers, problems of social adjustment. Pupils discussed their future, their health, and difficulties which arose in connection with their school work and activities.

The Breathitt County High School has a special guidance counselor. Some rural schools, however, are doing excellent work in guidance through their regular staff. In the North Wildwood, New Jersey, Junior High School two fifteen-minute periods a day are devoted to guidance in each home room, and one well-equipped teacher acts as a special consultant for students and serves as guidance leader. Some or all of the faculty meets together whenever necessary for conferences about individual students. In the Brunswick High School, Brunswick, Maryland, responsibility for guidance is also divided among all the teachers in accordance with a well-organized plan. The Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, and Senior classes each has a class adviser appointed by the principal. The four advisers constitute the Faculty Guidance Committee. They coordinate all work in guidance and are themselves responsible for certain special functions, such as preparing reference materials, administering tests, keeping records, and sponsoring extra-curriculum activities. The Guidance Committee works closely with the teachers, individually and by means of meetings, to make certain that the guidance work will be effective and well co-ordinated. Classroom teachers are responsible for integrating guidance material with subject matter. Home-room teachers take primary responsibility for the students' social adjustment and orientation at school.

Securing the co-operation of the faculty.—It is always essential to secure the co-operation of the faculty for the guidance program. Every teacher must be given some acquaintance with the principles and point of view upon which guidance is based. The benefit a student derives from his contacts with a particular counselor may readily be canceled by unsympathetic treatment from one or two teachers.

Many rural schools hold special faculty meetings for the discussion

of the guidance program and the principles which underlie it. The Saginaw County guidance counselor conducted teachers' meetings in four sections of the county on "The Meaning of Individual Guidance." The Newark Valley Central School holds weekly guidance consultation clinics in which the counselor and a small group of teachers discuss individual pupils. Each clinic is attended by the home-room teacher of the pupil under consideration, his classroom teachers, the school nurse, the study supervisor, other interested faculty members, and, if his presence is warranted, the school attendance officer. Information brought out and conclusions reached about the student are entered in his individual record folder. The clinics give teachers and counselor alike a better understanding of individual pupils and at the same time orient the teachers to guidance techniques.

The Alliance for Guidance of Rural Youth, the University of Kentucky, and other organizations interested in the guidance program in Breathitt County, Kentucky, have sponsored several summer institutes in Jackson, the county seat, for teachers of the Breathitt County High School and the county elementary schools, which are also participating in the program. It was realized that many of these teachers could not afford, and were not prepared for, university summer schools, and so school was brought to them. Each institute lasts as long as the ordinary university summer session, and college credit is given, by the University of Kentucky or Lees College, for work satisfactorily done. The program varies somewhat from year to year. In the 1936 institute two courses were required, "Guidance" and "Regional Problems." Instruction was also available in woodwork shop activity, arts and crafts, recreation, the use of the radio, the conduct of excursions, and other subjects. The teachers organized themselves into groups of six to consider such special problems as "Helping the Shy Child" and "Winning Parents' Co-operation." Immediately before the schools in Breathitt County opened, an intensive two-day session on guidance was held for the benefit of the teachers who had not attended the summer institute.

Guidance work with parents.—A few rural schools are beginning to tackle another important phase of guidance—work with parents. Most of these schools work through their parent-teacher associations

to foster an understanding of child growth and development. In Saginaw County, Michigan, five special parent education groups have been organized, each of which pursues its own program of child study with the help of the guidance counselor. Before meetings the parents sometimes visit school to see how their children act as members of a group and to familiarize themselves with the work of the school. Teachers join the parents after school hours and assist the guidance counselor in answering questions. Approximately four hundred parents participated in these child study groups the first year they were organized. They unquestionably gained a better understanding both of their children and of what the schools were trying to accomplish.

In Saginaw County the guidance counselor also works with parents individually, by means of home visits, when their children are frequently absent from school or present behavior problems. Truancy and irregular attendance are regarded as guidance problems. They can sometimes be solved by interpreting the school attendance law or by working out a convenient arrangement for transportation, but in other instances the counselor must deal with difficult and complicated situations. She may find that a child lacks suitable clothing or is in such poor health that he cannot attend school. Other children may have been kept out of school so much to work that they have become discouraged about their school progress. In visiting the home, the counselor may learn of a misunderstanding between teacher and pupil or teacher and parents which she can straighten out. She may be called upon for help and advice in connection with critical family difficulties. Obviously, a guidance counselor must be unusually well equipped by temperament and training to deal with the types of problems which arise in the course of home visits. Ideally she should be oriented to social service as well as to education. She must be familiar with the community's social agencies so that she can utilize their services and make referrals in situations she cannot handle without assistance. The counselor in Saginaw County, for example, co-operates with the county welfare department, attends court cases involving school children, and utilizes the services of the outstate mental clinic and the department of psychology at a near-by state teachers college.

Some rural schools are extending their guidance activities to graduates and students who drop out of school. In Pennsylvania, among other states, emphasis is placed upon the importance of learning the causes of these withdrawals. Sometimes students can be encouraged to return to school, perhaps by working out a program adjusted to their needs. In other cases they may be attracted to part-time and evening classes. Puyallup, Washington, does guidance work with its graduates who go on to college. Either the superintendent or the high-school principal visits during their Freshman year the students who attend colleges in the state of Washington. These visits sometimes help students to solve problems in connection with the transition from high school to college, and they furnish the superintendent and principal with information valuable in planning the work of the school.

VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE

Widespread unemployment and the exceptional difficulties youth face in finding jobs have focused the nation's attention on the importance of vocational guidance, "the process of assisting the individual to choose an occupation, prepare for it, enter upon it, and progress in it." It is of very great importance to society that each individual find, with the minimum amount of waste motion, the type of work in which he can make his most productive contribution. It is important, too, that youth be guided into and prepared for the vocational opportunities which actually exist. At present, in part because of inadequate provision for guidance, America has a large surplus of unskilled workers and a shortage of skilled workers—a situation which limits productiveness and retards preparations for defense.

Vocational guidance has particular significance for farm youth in view of the fact, to be discussed in chapter xii, that not more than half of them can hope to make their living in agriculture. As United States Commissioner of Education John W. Studebaker says:

On the farms there will be, on the average, four children to a family, at least two of whom not only have in the past decade, but must in the future, go to some city to make a living. In half of the cases the two that remain on the farm will face a living barely on the subsistence level. . . .

Thus to find economic opportunity many farm youth must migrate, some to villages and a far larger number to cities. Who should go and who should remain in the country? If they are to reach intelligent decisions, farm youth must be acquainted with urban as well as rural occupations and living conditions and must be given all possible help in deciding where their opportunities lie.

What guidance can and cannot do.—The possibilities of vocational guidance should not be overestimated. Despite the extravagant claims which have been made for it, vocational guidance cannot make jobs. In a period when millions of adult workers are unemployed, a youth may know precisely what work he wants to do, be well equipped for it, and still experience at least temporary difficulty in finding employment. Nor should vocational guidance be thought of as an exact science, able to direct each individual to the precise job where he has most promise of success. Indeed, it must not be assumed that the average individual can make a satisfactory vocational adjustment only in some one type of work. Most people can express their abilities in a variety of ways. In any case, there is not at present enough information about the relationship between job requirements and individual aptitudes to permit a counselor to make vocational recommendations with mathematical accuracy. The difficulties are further increased by the impracticability of securing complete knowledge of the individual and of occupational demands. Diagnostic tools are not sufficiently reliable to give a full and perfectly trustworthy picture of the individual. The facts about occupational distribution and employment opportunities in the local labor market and in the nation are difficult to secure and subject to unpredictable changes. Furthermore, people trained both to collect such information and to interpret it to students are scarce.

On the other hand, vocational guidance given by a reasonably well-equipped person can help a youth materially in choosing his field of work. By focusing his attention on his own interests and aptitudes, by giving him a realistic idea of occupational requirements and employment possibilities, it lays the groundwork for a rational decision. A recent survey revealed that nearly half of North Carolina's high-school boys and girls, white and Negro, plan to enter a profession. Only one white boy in 31 and one Negro boy in 175

realize that ambition. Guidance can save many youth from the disappointment ill-founded hopes may create. It can reduce the part that chance now plays in determining what they will do to earn their living. It can increase the likelihood that they may be able to find the type of work which will give them most satisfaction and enable them to make their maximum contribution to society.

Vocational guidance and the curriculum.—Vocational guidance, like every other phase of guidance, must be integrated with the rest of the educational program. Not only vocational courses but many academic courses, such as English, general science, and mathematics, are related to guidance because they give students an opportunity to explore occupational interests and furnish clues to their aptitudes for different types of work. The vocational courses, social science, and various other courses provide opportunities for group guidance and the acquisition of occupational information. Clearly, vocational guidance is closely related to every area of the curriculum.

It is particularly important that vocational guidance be closely tied up with vocational education. It is useless and even mischievous to train a youth for a job for which he has no special aptitude and in which he has no real interest. Vocational education, particularly in the junior high school years, should be exploratory and general in character. Furthermore, so far as possible it should prepare for opportunities which actually exist. For example, the department of agriculture at the Nyack High School in Rockland County, New York, "offers no courses in general farming, agronomy, or animal husbandry, but concentrates attention upon landscape gardening and horticulture which are the special phases of agriculture which offer employment opportunities in the district served by the school." To be of real value to students, vocational education must be based upon, and accompanied by, vocational guidance.

Organization of vocational guidance programs.—The number of rural schools offering their students vocational guidance, like the number with personal-social guidance programs, is small but constantly increasing. Ways are being devised to provide guidance service without employing a full-time counselor. No one of the schools whose vocational guidance programs are described below has a special person giving his full time to guidance. One has a part-time

counselor; one group of schools have pooled their resources to employ a counselor; and one school provides guidance through its regular staff.

The Newark Valley Central School has a part-time counselor who also does administrative work as vice-principal. Two teachers have specific group-guidance responsibilities in connection with the teaching of classes ("Personal Problems," given in the seventh and eighth grades, and "Social Studies," given in the ninth grade). In addition, the vocational teachers, the school nurse, and the art and music teachers do informal counseling in their own fields. All teachers co-operate with the program by giving tests, by making ratings of pupils, and by participating in the guidance consultation clinics described earlier in the chapter.

Excluding the salaries of those with guidance responsibilities, the entire program costs Newark Valley less than \$150 a year. Including the salary of the counselor for the time he devoted to guidance, the program cost only \$505 the first year it was in operation, despite some special and nonrecurring expenses.

The state of New York encourages rural areas and independent school districts within a county to co-operate in furnishing special educational services by offering to share the cost of such services. Taking advantage of this legislative provision, thirteen of the school districts in Rockland County have united to employ a director of vocational and educational guidance. He visits these schools on a definite schedule to counsel the students, especially with respect to problems dealing with occupational adjustment, to train teachers for participation in the program, and to give, or supervise the giving of, tests. In addition, he directs county surveys to secure occupational information, prepares material on guidance for the entire group of schools, and solicits among other social agencies, employers, and the general public co-operation for the guidance program.

A co-operative arrangement such as this permits the participating schools to secure—without exorbitant expense to any one unit—the services of a counselor capable of instructing teachers and supervising the guidance work in the entire group of schools. It enables the schools to amass more employment and occupational information than they could possibly obtain individually without

excessive cost. Obviously, however, the arrangement has its own particular weaknesses. Difficulties may be encountered, for example, in securing the co-operation of the teachers from many different schools and in becoming familiar with the problems and personalities of a great number of students.

The Frederick High School in Frederick, Maryland, provides excellent vocational guidance through its regular staff by means of group and individual counseling and a carefully planned curriculum. Semimonthly guidance programs are held in all of the thirty home rooms in the school. Six teachers—two each for Freshmen and Sophomores and one each for Juniors and Seniors—are designated as class advisers and given a lighter teaching load so that they can do individual counseling. The study of occupations is a regular part of the curriculum for each of the first two years. At the end of the Sophomore year each student selects the three occupations which interest him most. His program for the remaining two years is built around securing the best possible preparation for them.

Many other rural schools are conducting successful guidance programs through their regular staffs. The teachers who bear the brunt of the work are carefully selected on the basis of their occupational knowledge and their ability to win students' confidence. Responsibility for each phase of the program is definitely fixed, and standards of procedure are worked out which all teachers observe. Schools without special guidance counselors, of course, face great difficulties in assembling information about occupations and employment opportunities. Much of the occupational material which is available is too technical to be readily interpreted to students.

Phases of guidance.—According to the United States Office of Education, a complete guidance program should provide for six things: (1) individual inventory, (2) occupational information, (3) counseling, (4) exploration of training opportunities, (5) placement, and (6) follow-up. What rural schools are doing in each of these phases of guidance will be discussed in the rest of this chapter.

1. *Individual inventory.*—Information about the pupil is as essential for vocational guidance as for personal-social guidance, in the discussion of which its value has already been stressed. Vocational guidance aims to help the individual choose and prepare for an occu-

pation in the light of *his* intelligence, aptitudes, personality, and ambitions. Adequate yet simple personal records have the same importance for vocational guidance as for other types of guidance work.

2. *Securing and presenting occupational information.*—The second phase of guidance has two important aspects: securing occupational information and presenting it effectively to students. Because many farm and village youth must migrate to find economic opportunity, in rural schools it is particularly necessary to secure information about occupations and employment opportunities on a national as well as a local basis. Until recent years little reliable national material was available. Within the past few years, however, the United States Department of Labor has established, as a department of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, a National Occupational Outlook Service to secure information about the supply and demand for workers in the various occupational groups. The Employment Service Division of the Bureau of Employment Security in the Federal Security Agency has made an exhaustive analysis of the functions and requirements of jobs in the major occupational fields. The United States Office of Education has set up an Occupational Information and Guidance Service, which has already established co-operative arrangements with the other two federal agencies. Several states have established occupational information and guidance services. Many other governmental, educational, and private agencies might be mentioned which are collecting and disseminating vocational information. Today rural schools can obtain a wealth of up-to-the-minute data on occupations and national employment trends.

Schools must, of course, supplement these data by studies of their local labor markets. The Newark Valley School, the Rockland County schools, the Tomah High School, Tomah, Wisconsin, and many other schools throughout the country have made careful occupational surveys of their surrounding areas, including both the countryside and the near-by villages and cities. The best of these surveys have not been content to list and describe the occupations of the area but have sought to uncover actual employment opportunities. In Rockland County, for example, while the students from all the schools engaging in guidance co-operated in a house-to-house

canvass to discover the occupational status and kind and place of employment of each person in the county, the county guidance director, the junior placement counselor attached to the local public employment office, and selected W.P.A. workers interviewed employers to locate possible jobs.

Surveys of agriculture, too, should be concerned with discovering placement possibilities. J. W. Hatch has developed one excellent technique, reported in a recent United States Office of Education publication, for studying farms from the point of view of the opportunities they offer to young men. Information is secured about both the farm and the operator and his family, and the possibilities of expanding the farm business are examined. Particularly if the farmer has no sons, he is questioned about possible opportunities for young men as workers, tenants, or partners in share agreements. A survey of this character may not only uncover but actually create a certain number of placement opportunities. Furthermore, it furnishes the guidance counselor with information of value for his future placement work. In the Hatch survey, for example, it was found that young farm operators hire the greatest amount of labor and middle-aged operators the least.

Information about the occupational fields which offer employment possibilities should be made readily available to students. Newark Valley concentrates its efforts on learning the nature and requirements of the nearly three hundred different occupations found within a twenty-five-mile radius of the school. Information about them is obtained through observation, interviews with employers, and such supplementary sources as books, bulletins, pamphlets, and pictures. The accumulated information is filed for easy reference in the counselor's room, to which students have access at all times. Students also learn about occupations through class discussions; through outside speakers, each of whom discusses his particular field; through interviews arranged by the school; and through visits to near-by industrial centers.

Nyack and other Rockland County schools emphasize occupational information in their curriculums. An intensive one-semester course in occupations is offered in junior high school, and occupational materials are included in many other courses from the upper

elementary grades through the high school. In addition, about eighteen occupational forums are held each year for students in Grades VI–XII. Early meetings are devoted to general subjects and to the local occupational patterns, with each of the final ten forums covering one important occupational field. Students acquaint themselves in advance with the field to be discussed and are prepared to ask questions of the speaker.

3. *Counseling*.—Counseling procedure is essentially the same whether vocational or other types of problems are being discussed. One interesting aspect of the vocational counseling at Newark Valley is the effort made to prepare pupils for their interviews. In an early social science course three weeks are devoted to making an individual analysis. Tests and other devices used in securing personal inventory data are explained to pupils. In still other courses they are oriented to some of the problems involved in making wise educational and occupational choices. Thus, when the time comes for their individual interviews, they are ready to secure the utmost benefit from them.

4. *Exploration of training opportunities*.—The fourth phase of guidance, the exploration of training opportunities, is concerned with helping students plan their preparation for the work they intend to pursue. As the discussion of vocational education will make clear, the vast majority of jobs do not require highly specialized training of the sort which can or should be furnished by the school. The best preparation for most types of work is a planned program of general education, molded to the student's interests, abilities, and ambitions and pursued with purpose. However, vocational objectives should be considered in planning every student's educational program, and those students planning to enter occupations demanding highly specialized skills should be advised where to get their training. While they may be able to get some or all of it through the vocational courses offered in their own high school, they should also be informed of the possibilities for obtaining instruction at colleges, universities, and various types of technical schools. In New York a pupil may attend any high school in the state offering a vocational course in which he is interested; guidance counselors must be able to furnish information about courses offered in other secondary schools.

The guidance counselor at Newark Valley maintains an up-to-date

file of catalogues of schools, colleges, and technical and trade institutions. Speakers from prominent schools are invited to Newark Valley, and students, especially members of the Senior class, visit near-by educational institutions. The counselor is a member of the Student Aid Association of Hartford, Connecticut, through which he attempts to obtain scholarships and other forms of student aid for worthy and needy pupils.

5. *Placement: bringing jobs and youth together.*—Placement, implementing the study of jobs and youth by bringing the two together, is an essential part of guidance. Whenever possible, the school should consummate its responsibility to its students by doing what it can to see that they find employment in work for which they are prepared. Its placement efforts will benefit the community as well as the students and will provide the school with information useful for evaluating and improving its guidance and educational program.

However, too much should not be expected of the placement efforts of the school. Through their guidance and educational programs the schools can contribute to the development of productive and efficient workers, but they cannot create jobs; they can only attempt to locate them. It must be remembered that they have limited resources for this task and are novices at it.

In view of their inadequate resources, and in the interest of economy, it is essential that the schools co-operate with other agencies interested in junior placement. In particular, good working arrangements should be made with the federal-state network of public employment offices. In various parts of the country there has been considerable controversy as to which agency, the schools or the federal-state employment system, should accept responsibility for junior placement. The fact is that neither can handle the job satisfactorily without the co-operation of the other. Particularly in rural areas, where there is more than enough work for both, the controversy seems barren and pointless. As of August, 1940, less than a third of the sixteen hundred public employment offices in the United States had special facilities for junior applicants. Few rural schools are adequately staffed for placement work. After carefully studying the question of who should be responsible for placement, the Regents'

Inquiry into the Cost and Character of Public Education in the State of New York concluded:

At the present time the important thing is that the leaving pupils, both graduates and nongraduates, should be placed, not who is to place them. For this reason either the school system or the . . . [federal-state employment system], or the two combined, should provide placement facilities.

The school and the public employment offices both benefit by entering into a co-operative arrangement. Only in extraordinary cases are rural schools staffed to investigate employment possibilities in their entire natural labor market, which may include the territory covered by six to twenty administrative units operating secondary schools. By co-operating with the public employment office which serves that market, they greatly improve the chances that their students will be placed satisfactorily. On the other hand, the information the school has accumulated about its students helps the employment office in the classification and placement of its inexperienced applicants.

Excellent patterns for the co-operation of rural schools and public employment offices have already been developed. In general, they are of two kinds: either a representative of the nearest employment office visits the schools to interview and counsel students or students are referred to the employment office. Rockland County has an arrangement of the first type. A junior counselor on the staff of the public employment office at Nyack visits all seven high schools in the county on regular schedule. His itinerary is posted throughout the county so that out-of-school youth, as well as students, will know when they can see him. All the schools in the county receive the benefit of the counselor's efforts to locate jobs, and employers find it convenient to be able to fill many of their personnel requirements through one central agency. The counselor submits to the schools monthly placement reports which are helpful in their guidance work.

Another smooth-working co-operative arrangement has been developed in Maryland as a result of an experiment conducted jointly by the American Youth Commission and the United States Employment Service (now the Employment Service Division of the Federal Security Agency). Each year on March 1 the schools in

Frederick, Cumberland, Salisbury, and Elkton counties submit to the public employment office serving the area the names of all withdrawing students or prospective graduates who want jobs. Complete information about each student is supplied on a form which is prepared jointly by the schools and the employment office. Between March 1 and the end of the school year each youth is called into the employment office for interviews, and an intensive effort is made to place him.

In addition to co-operating with public employment offices, rural schools are doing a great deal on their own to place their students. The Middletown, Maryland, High School builds its Senior program around job-getting. The first third of the year is devoted to a review of economic and occupational material studied during the first three years, with the students divided into groups in accordance with their vocational interests. In the second third of the year each student pursues an individual project designed to give him a close acquaintance with the occupational field he intends to enter. He reads in appropriate professional periodicals or trade papers, if possible observes the work of the field at first hand, and lists and talks with prospective employers. His findings, summarized in a paper, are often of value to the counselor and other students as well as to him. The last part of the year is devoted to self-evaluation and the development of a good job-seeking technique, with attention to filling out employment applications, writing letters, and planning employment interviews.

Many rural schools do a certain amount of placement in connection with vocational education courses. The work of teachers of vocational agriculture will be discussed in chapter vi. The co-operative part-time diversified occupations program has also led to a considerable amount of placement. Under this program high-school students of employable age work in a field of their choice for half of each school day, securing instruction on the job, and devote at least two periods of the portion of the day spent in school to supervised study of subjects closely related to their field of employment. In one of the first communities to adopt this program, 36 per cent of the first graduating class continued in permanent employment with the business or industrial establishment where training was received and an additional 32 per cent secured employment with other firms in

the same field. An analysis indicated that youth employed where training was received did not displace older workers but were retained because they had made places for themselves. When carefully supervised to prevent the exploitation of students and the violation of equitable labor practices, the diversified occupations program, which will be further discussed in chapter vi, is of the greatest value to rural schools. It expands their capacity to provide exploratory training experiences and to place students.

6. *Follow-up of former students.*—The final essential of a well-rounded guidance program is follow-up work with graduates and youth who have dropped out of school. To both of these groups modern rural schools feel an increasing sense of responsibility. The efforts of some schools to help out-of-school youth will be described in chapter xii. The study of the school's former students has many values, however, even when it does not eventuate in action to help them. The information it uncovers helps administrators and teachers appraise the educational and guidance program and sometimes is of value to the students. Largely with the purpose of combating a feeling of despair prevalent among its students in 1934, Nyack High School surveyed its graduates for the ten-year period 1924-34. Of the 579 graduates, 547 replied to a questionnaire. Only 44 were unemployed or not in school or college. Seventy-seven students had earned at least part of their expenses while going to college. The survey report, compiled, of course, without names, gave students a realistic and yet encouraging picture of educational and employment possibilities. Nyack now keeps a live file of graduates for a ten-year span and prepares an annual report for its students on the experience of recent graduates.

In a few schools which have not conducted general studies of former students, one or another vocational department has surveyed its particular group of alumni. In the Frederick High School, for example, information obtained from commercial graduates of the preceding five years was utilized in revising the commercial curriculum.

How long should the school display an active interest in its graduates and drop-outs and maintain its records on them? A few rural schools are beginning to say, "Until they are more or less permanently established occupationally." Only then may the vocational guidance program be regarded as truly complete.

RURAL AMERICA TODAY

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CHAPTER VI

VOCATIONAL PREPARATION IN RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS

AS A consequence of the attempts to meet the diverse needs of the many students who now attend secondary schools, an increasing amount of attention has been given to vocational education. The preparation of youth for productive work has always been an important educational objective, but it is not one with which the high school was greatly concerned a half a century ago. Most of its students were going on to college, and it was there they received the more strictly vocational part of their education—their training for teaching, or medicine, or law. Youth not preparing for the professions were trained by other agencies—the home, the farm, the shop, and the store. By modern standards most occupational fields were not exacting in their requirements, and the inexperienced worker was not too seriously handicapped. Because new jobs were constantly opening up, it was relatively easy, furthermore, for young men to switch around until they found the sort of work for which they were suited.

Today the high-school students preparing for college and the professions are vastly outnumbered by those who will work on the farm and in the production and distribution of goods. Because most types of work—operating a farm, running a store—require far more knowledge and skill than formerly, some preliminary acquaintance with them and preparation for them is essential. More stringent economic conditions and the increased percentage of adults in the population have made employment too hazardous to encourage shifting from job to job. For a decade prior to the present defense boom even trained workers often experienced difficulty in finding work, particularly if they were young; untrained workers are still seriously handicapped in securing employment. In this changed environment the school clearly has a far more important role in training youth for vocational competence.

The rural high school, in particular, must be concerned with preparing its students for work. Those of its students who intend to remain on the farm and those who will migrate to cities both need vocational preparation. The boys and girls who are already assuming responsibility in connection with farm and home not only require instruction in the several disciplines involved in their work and impinging upon it but would find their school work sterile and devoid of reality if it neglected the fields of interest around which their lives are already beginning to center. Students who will migrate to cities need vocational preparation so that they will not be handicapped in finding jobs and will be able to do productive work for which they are fitted. In the case of this group of students, too, there is a fortunate identity of interests and needs; several studies have shown that rural youth have a bent for mechanical and technical pursuits. Vocational preparation is winning a place in the rural school curriculum because it at once serves the needs and commands the interest of that vast majority of students—as many as ninety-seven in every hundred in some schools—who must attempt to prepare themselves while in high school for homemaking and for earning a living.

The need for a broad, general program.—Students' needs should dictate the nature of the vocational program which is offered in the rural high school. It is clear, for example, that it should be as broad as possible, for it must serve the needs of youth who will migrate to village and city as well as those who will remain on the farm. Indeed, many youth in the latter group must be prepared to supplement the income from farming with some nonagricultural employment. The program should cover developing occupations, such as those in the service field, as well as occupations already established in importance. To fill these specifications, the rural school vocational program must include offerings in a number of different fields, so that students will have the opportunity to explore the possibilities of, and their aptitudes for, many types of work. If the program is confined to one or two fields, for example, agriculture and home economics, it cannot provide this opportunity and is certain to neglect the needs of many students.

It is clear also that each vocational course which is offered should be broad and general rather than narrow and specific. While some

occupations require specialized, intensive training in addition to broad, preliminary preparation, the latter is indispensable in the complex and rapidly changing economic life of today. The nature of the vast majority of jobs, the rapidity of occupational change, and the complexity of the social and economic environment make intelligence, a good general background, and adaptability more important perhaps than ever before. Almost any sort of work demands some degree of mastery of such basic subjects as language and arithmetic. As always, good work habits and character are essential ingredients of vocational success. As an increasing percentage of the population is absorbed in service occupations and the interrelationships of economic life grow more delicate and precise, the personal and social adjustment of the worker becomes a matter of paramount importance. The modern worker must be able to mesh his efforts with those of others, take orders and direct others, and serve the needs of the community of which he is a member.

A recent analysis of 2,216 occupations in eighteen representative industries showed that most of them demand little or no specialized training. Two-thirds of the jobs required no more than an elementary-school education as a qualification for employment. The data show definitely that in a great majority of jobs employment and satisfactory performance are not dependent on highly specialized preliminary preparation. Indeed, little training is required on the job itself. Two-thirds of the occupations were so simple that with less than a week's training normal production could be attained. Only 10 per cent demanded more than six months' training. Currently, because of America's gigantic rearmament program and the widespread neglect of vocational training during the 1930's, there is a shortage of skilled labor, but even in connection with defense production it has been estimated that only 37.5 per cent of the workers need to be highly skilled.

The rapid shifts in employment opportunities also make it unwise for the schools to attempt to give a highly specialized type of vocational preparation. Each year thousands of jobs are created or annihilated as a result of changes in consumer demand and in manufacturing processes. Almost overnight the defense program has revolutionized the requirements of the labor market. To be reasonably

secure in a world as dynamic and disturbed as the one we live in, the worker must be prepared to shift not only from job to job but from one occupation to another. An analysis made before the advent of the defense program revealed that more than half of the workers in manufacturing plants in Minnesota had previously been employed in some other industry.

Such facts suggest that, even so far as vocational competence is concerned, in the great majority of cases sound general education can contribute more than a highly specific type of vocational training. What counts is intelligence, character, alertness, flexibility—the ability to learn quickly and to adjust one's self readily to a new situation; and these are objectives of general education. The facts also strongly suggest that the vocational preparation which is offered in secondary schools should be general rather than specific in character. For example, so far as youth headed for mechanical work are concerned, it has been said that

it is not training for any particular job in industry that is the valuable contribution of the schools, but general training at mechanical jobs, especially the acclimation of the student mechanically and industrially. The most valuable attribute of the trained high school boy is his mechanical resourcefulness, his mechanical adjustability to job conditions, the sort of man who can shift, as required, from one job to another.

Vocational preparation and general education.—There is a measure of accord between what the facts suggest the schools should do in preparing their students for work and what they can do without raising the cost of vocational preparation to prohibitive heights and abandoning other educational objectives. Rural schools, in particular, could not afford the equipment and staff necessary for highly specialized and intensive vocational courses. In view of the thousands of jobs represented in any one labor market and the long, intensive training necessary for some of them, it is completely impracticable, economically and educationally, for secondary schools, especially rural schools, to prepare students for the specific requirements of definite jobs. The specialized training required for the performance of a particular job must in most cases be the responsibility of the industry or firm which benefits by that training and is in a position to give it; or, in the case of occupations requiring long periods of

preparation, of other educational agencies and of apprentice programs. While training for specific jobs must continue to be provided in most instances by or in co-operation with private industry, training specific enough to prepare one for a particular occupation may increasingly tend to be given under public auspices. It is clear, however, that the typical rural school could not hope to offer training of this character except, perhaps, in the case of one or two occupations. The most satisfactory means of providing such training have yet to be determined, but considerations of what is practicable and what is desirable both suggest that much of it will have to be given in relatively large centers of population and at the post-high-school level. The responsibility of the secondary school for vocational preparation is the development of those intellectual abilities, personal qualities, and work habits which are essential for competence in any field and training in the basic skills which underlie whole families of occupations. The fulfilment of this responsibility will strain the resources of most rural schools and require the exercise of much educational ingenuity.

The provision of sound general vocational preparation is, however, not only feasible but desirable and in keeping with the school's basic objectives. Whereas highly specialized courses would have to be, as it were, patched on to the rest of the school program, there is no quarrel nor even any hard-and-fast distinction between general education and vocational education when the latter is broad in character. Education for farming not only permits but requires instruction in arithmetic, in chemistry, and in biology. Manual dexterity possesses vocational value, but it is also a means of creative expression. Careful buying plays an increasingly important part in homemaking and is taught in home economics courses; but it requires some knowledge of business, in particular, of retailing, advertising, and selling; the ability to compare costs, to figure the operating expenses of various types of equipment, and to compute the cost of credit; some understanding of the scientific principles involved in the construction and operation of merchandise and of the types of experiments by which it may be tested; and the ability to find and efficiently use helpful reference material. Thus this one "vocational" topic ties up with almost every area of the school program.

Rural schools cannot neglect vocational preparation without divorcing themselves from life and disregarding some of the most vital interests and needs of their students. In particular, instruction in agriculture and home economics offers the schools an almost invaluable opportunity to tie up classroom activity with the everyday responsibilities of many of their students on the farm and in the home. In addition to preparing for work, the kind of vocational education which meets the needs of students also contributes to the breadth, reality, and appeal of the entire school program.

The difficulty of offering a broad, general program.—Rural high schools face difficulties, however, in offering a vocational program which is broad, general, and integrated with the rest of the curriculum offerings. If training for the countless specific jobs represented in any one labor market is out of the question, the provision of basic general courses for each important occupational area is by no means easy. Because many rural youth migrate to cities, it would be desirable to give students the opportunity to explore every major occupational field, urban as well as rural. Thus the rural school vocational program should include courses in (1) agriculture, (2) home economics, (3) trades and industries, (4) business, (5) the distributive occupations, and (6) the service occupations. Despite the availability of some federal financial assistance, few rural schools can afford to provide courses in all the above subjects. Practically no rural schools offer courses in the distributive occupations or the service occupations, only a few offer courses in trades and industries, and a surprising number find it impossible to teach agriculture and home economics.

Ironically, certain legislative and administrative requirements of the federal program to aid vocational education contribute to the difficulties rural schools face in offering a satisfactory program. As an offset, a careful evaluative study has shown, the federal program has been in part responsible for the rapid expansion of vocational education in American schools. Certain provisions, however, have retarded the development of a satisfactory program. For example, the requirements of federal vocational legislation that federal funds be matched—dollar for dollar except in the case of the most recent act—by state and local funds, coupled with the fact that only a relatively expensive type of vocational instruction qualifies for

federal reimbursement, make it impossible for many rural schools to avail themselves of federal assistance. Robbing Peter to pay Paul, other schools have purchased expensive vocational agriculture and home economics equipment by curtailing expenditures elsewhere. The result has been overcrowding and inadequate equipment in many nonvocational classes and a lack of balance in the total educational program. The undesirability of starving general education so as to be able to offer vocational courses is apparent.

In general, federal grants for vocational education have tended to go to communities least in need of assistance. As has been suggested by the Advisory Committee on Education, grants should be made on the basis of need rather than ability to meet matching requirements, so that they will contribute far more than they do at present to the equalization of educational opportunity.

In the federally reimbursed vocational program place of residence is used as an index to the need of a group for a particular type of vocational preparation, and the population of rural areas is not included in the basis on which the allotment of funds for trade and industrial education is determined. This has tended to discourage provision of industrial courses in rural schools and thus has militated against the development of a well-rounded vocational program.

Certain special requirements of the federal vocational program have tended to isolate vocational education from general education. Indeed, it may be said that in general both federal legislation pertaining to vocational education and, at least in the past, administrative interpretations and rulings have fostered a narrow rather than a broad conception of vocational education. The framers and administrators of federal legislation, however, were not exclusively or even primarily responsible for the narrow view of vocational education which dominated educational thought until the last decade or two. Earlier in the century it was generally believed that vocational training had to be highly specific to be valuable. The majority of psychologists and educators denied the possibility of the transfer of training; little was known about the requirements of industry; and, in all probability, the need for workers with a general orientation to industry rather than specialized skill was less acute. Of the three elements which today's educators regard as essential ingredients of a

sound program of vocational preparation—informational content, the development of manipulative skill, and an orientation to the social and economic situation—only the second received any considerable emphasis in most vocational training, whether its sponsorship was federal or local. The information, understandings, and intellectual abilities necessary for proficiency in a given occupation received little attention, and consideration of such things as unions and social legislation was almost completely neglected.

Prospects for the future.—In developing vocational programs which are broad, general, and comprehensive enough to serve the needs of most students, rural high schools have been handicapped by their poverty and smallness, by the notion that vocational education has to be specific to be effective, by the belief of some educators that preparation for work has no legitimate place in the school program, and by certain features of the federal government's vocational education program.

The difficulties rural schools face today in improving their vocational education programs are by no means insurmountable, however. Both the latest federal vocational legislation and the recent administration of the federal program have been more liberal than in the past. A broad concept of vocational education has triumphed over the belief in highly particularized training which formerly prevailed. Not only are an ever increasing number of rural students receiving occupational preparation, but that preparation is more broadly conceived and more closely linked with general education than ever before. A small but increasing number of rural schools recognizes the necessity of providing a well-rounded vocational program which permits their students to explore various occupational fields and to secure the type of preparation which accords with their interests, aptitudes, and ambitions. In several states special arrangements have been made which permit youth to go outside their local school district, if necessary, to secure the kind of vocational training they want and need.

A great deal of excellent vocational preparation is now being provided in rural schools, and the trends in evidence all point to the broadening, extension, and improvement of the present program. The discussion of the various types of vocational courses now offered in rural schools should make this clear.

PREPARATION FOR AGRICULTURE

The desirability of rural schools' providing instruction in agriculture is scarcely open to question. Vocational agriculture meets every criterion which educators have set up for selecting the types of occupational preparation which should be offered in the schools. To consider one of the criteria stressed in the preceding discussion, the instructional program in vocational agriculture can be broad and readily linked with general education. In such a program courses designed to lay the basis for good farm management might include: (1) training in sound business practices, including cost accounting, supply-and-demand factors as related to quantity and quality of production, co-operative marketing and purchasing; (2) scientific farming, including soil conservation, improved breeds of livestock and varieties of crops, control of insect pests and plant and animal diseases; (3) mechanics, including the use of power machines; (4) plant maintenance and improvement; and (5) social co-operation, including information about farm organizations, administration of federal farm programs, and fundamental policies of the community, the state, and the nation in the development of agriculture. Obviously there is much to teach, and an opportunity for co-ordination between agriculture and the program in general education. It is recognized that

vocational-agriculture programs should provide for instruction in the basic sciences and in the related fundamentals; in the fundamentals of health and in social relations; in economics; and in other subjects with which young men and adult farmers in the complex social environment of today should be familiar.

From the strictly vocational point of view instruction in agriculture is widely applicable. Farming itself, it must be remembered, still absorbs more than 30 per cent of the nation's man-power. The shop work in agriculture gives students at least a minimum orientation to industrial occupations. The social emphasis now evident in agriculture instruction will help youth in their work careers whether they live in city or country.

Availability of instruction in vocational agriculture.—In view of the manifest importance of preparing many youth for farming, it would appear that instruction in vocational agriculture should be offered in

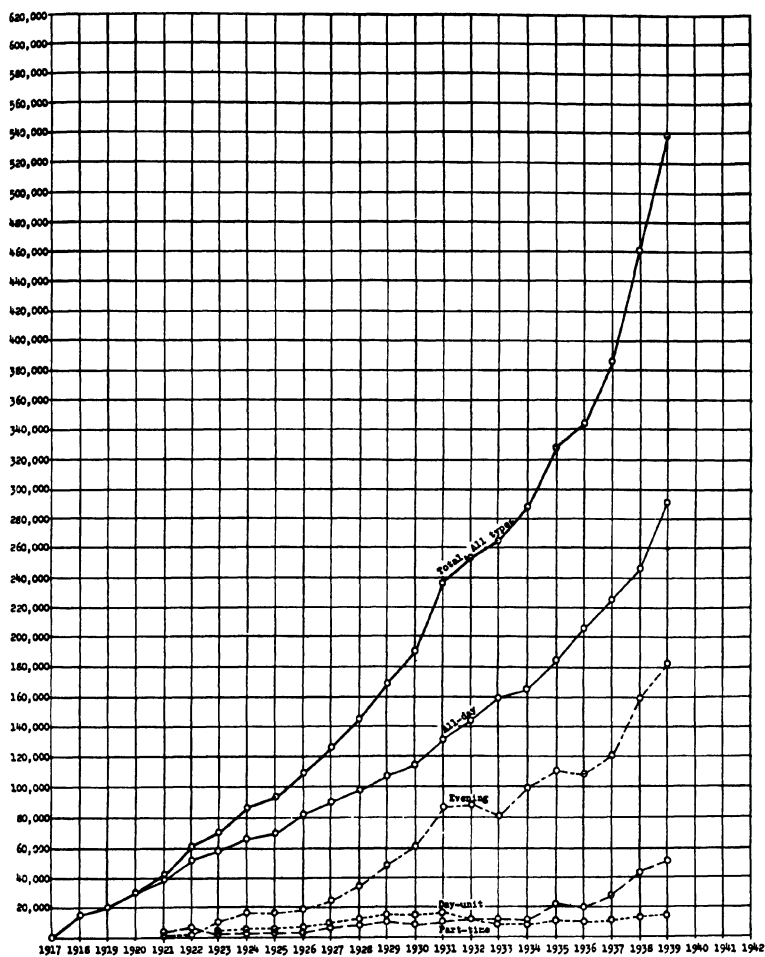


FIG 5—Enrolment in federally aided agricultural departments or schools by years, 1918-39

practically every high school serving farm youth in considerable numbers. In fact, despite the rapid progress which has been made in making instruction available since the passage in 1917 of the first federal vocational education act (see Fig. 5), this goal is still far from being attained. In 1938 there were 6,906 high schools with vocational agriculture departments, but the United States Office of Education estimated that there were 8,000 other schools where departments should be established. Although high-school enrolments in vocational agriculture rose to a new high of over 280,000 in 1939, approximately three high-school boys out of every four who lived on farms were not receiving instruction.

Of course, instruction in agriculture is neither needed nor wanted by every farm boy. It should, however, be available for all those who do want it. The extent of the availability of courses in vocational agriculture varies greatly among the states. In New York, the Regents' Inquiry found, practically all rural youth have the opportunity to obtain instruction, either at their own high school or as non-resident students in near-by schools. On the other hand, a recent Virginia study showed that only 800 students trained in agriculture are being graduated each year, whereas 4,000 replacement opportunities in farming become available. Out of 147 small high schools in Washington, most of them located in agricultural communities, only 19 offer instruction in agriculture.

Vocational agriculture is missing from the program of many rural high schools primarily because of their inability to support even in part the expensive type of instruction the federal vocational program calls for. The Washington state school survey found that in some communities the control of educational policy by townspeople and an inadequate supply of trained teachers were also retarding the extension of the vocational agriculture program.

The instructional program.—While the nature of the work in vocational agriculture varies somewhat in each community, in part because of federal influence, certain general, nation-wide trends are evident. From the beginning instruction has been centered largely around supervised farm practice programs, but these programs have now been considerably widened in scope. A good program now embraces several production projects, including a major which extends

over the entire period of the student's high-school attendance; projects directed toward the improvement of the farm rather than immediate financial return; and, to insure the student's well-rounded development, supplementary farm practice with no direct relationship to the projects. Courses of study are being reorganized to dovetail with the present broad type of farm practice program. Instead of crops being taught one year, livestock the next, etc., each year's work includes units which will help the student in the various phases of his supervised farm practice.

The practical value of the vocational agriculture program for the student is apparent. It is based directly upon his needs and at the same time acquaints him with the agricultural conditions which prevail generally in the community. Through his supervised farm practice program the student may earn some money, and he acquires practical experience in every phase of agricultural work which is locally important. His earnings and the experience gained from his projects are sometimes the direct means of his getting established in farming—either on his father's farm, some other farm in the community, or his own.

The supervised farm practice program fosters the closest relationship between school and community. C. M. Miller, director of vocational education for Kansas, writes: "It is not at all unusual for all the major farm operations on the boy's home farm to be carried on under the advice of the teacher of vocational agriculture, for in many, many instances, the parents become interested in the boy's work and seek the advice of the teacher." In most parts of the country the vocational agriculture teacher enjoys the confidence of his community. He is usually associated, sometimes in a position of leadership, not only with its economic life but with general programs of community improvement.

Instruction in vocational agriculture stresses increasingly the community and broad social aspects of farm management and agricultural conditions. Emphasis is placed on problems of marketing, agricultural economics, soil conservation, land-use planning, and on developing social understandings and co-operative attitudes. Through the regular instructional program or a club, the Future Farmers of America, to be discussed later in the chapter, students

are given experience in co-operative buying and selling activities and in organizing and operating community hatcheries, canning plants, and sawmills.

Vocational agriculture and placement.—The major aim of instruction in agriculture is to assist young men to establish themselves in farming, and, as has been seen, its program is well designed for this purpose. Many teachers of vocational agriculture do guidance and placement work within their field which exactly parallels the work of school-wide vocational guidance programs in the entire field of occupations. Indeed, in many schools the agriculture instructor does general guidance and placement work. Because of long class periods in agriculture, the broad scope of the agriculture program, and his out-of-school contacts with students, he is in a strategic position to know their strengths and weaknesses.

In planning the vocational agriculture curriculum and in supervising the farm practice programs of his students, the agriculture instructor becomes familiar with the farms and farmers of the territory served by his school. It is ordinarily not difficult for him to get whatever additional information he may need to discover the placement possibilities these farms offer. Through his knowledge and contacts he is often able to get students and former students placed and to guide them in acquiring farms as they become available. Frequently he is instrumental in helping them to win places for themselves on their fathers' farms. Some agricultural economists believe that the margin between good and bad farm management is now so great that on many types of farms of 160 acres or more, a young man trained in scientific farming can readily earn a satisfactory place for himself beside his father.

Follow-up of former students plays an especially important part in the placement activity of vocational agriculture instructors. Ordinarily, today, a young man does not become established in farming as an operator until he has been out of high school six or seven years. During this period he needs guidance and further instruction. It is now recognized that education in agriculture should be a continuous process, and a special part-time program is available for young men out of school who are becoming established in farm-

ing. This program will be discussed in chapter xii. In addition, evening classes, to be discussed in chapter xiii, are available for adult farm operators.

HOME ECONOMICS

“Education for intelligent participation in family life” is the basic objective of the home economics program. The psychological and sociological investigations of the twentieth century have shed new light on the influence of the family on the personal, social, and intellectual development of its members. Simultaneously it has been perceived that homemaking is a highly skilled occupation requiring mastery of a considerable, and constantly expanding, body of knowledge and of many important techniques. The breadth of the preparation necessary for successful homemaking is well illustrated by the following list of specific objectives of home economics education: (1) management of personal finances, including selection and purchase of goods and services on the basis of value and appropriateness; family finances; (2) home management, including nutrition, marketing, preparation and serving of food; selection and care of clothing; selection and use of household appliances and supplies; home furnishings and decoration; (3) child care; (4) health; and (5) family and social co-operation, including family activities; personal relationships; and community and social relationships.

These objectives are stated in terms of functions, and it is hoped that instruction in homemaking will result ultimately in appropriate action—in improvement of the students’ present homes and skilful management of the homes they themselves establish. But home economics education by no means confines itself to the development of manipulative skills. Although instruction is based on concrete situations and home projects similar to those employed in vocational agriculture, equal emphasis is placed on developing the intellectual understandings which underlie action. Practice in doing is supplemented by consideration of basic principles in such fields as science and social science, so that pupils will not only attain proficiency in their present tasks but adapt themselves readily to new situations. An attempt is made also to develop appreciation of the functions of art and decoration in homemaking.

More stress is being placed on increasing the pupils' capacity for satisfactory human relationships. The relation of the student to other members of the family, principles of child development, and the relation of the family to the community all receive attention in present well-rounded home economics curriculums. Inevitably a great deal of material is utilized from the field of social science, much of which would not otherwise be available in the school program.

Vocational aspects of home economics.—In view of the scope of home economics, perhaps it should not be classified as vocational education. Certainly it is more closely linked with the rest of the educational program than most vocational subjects. At the University of Tennessee and the Farragut High School in Knoxville experiments are under way to integrate home economics still more closely with vocational agriculture and the general subjects in the school program.

Home economics has, however, certain definitely vocational aspects. It furnishes a foundation for specific and intensive training for home demonstration work, hotel, restaurant and tearoom management, dietary work, designing, and, of course, the various domestic service jobs. In New York a sharp distinction is made between home economics courses, which are relatively general in character, and vocational homemaking courses, which have as one of their chief objectives preparing students for remunerative employment. In the more strictly vocational courses, as in the home economics courses, the work is closely adapted to pupils' abilities and needs. For some pupils, primary emphasis is placed on developing routine mechanical skills, while others are trained for positions calling for managerial ability.

In the nation as a whole only a few schools have thus far developed special courses in units specifically pointed toward preparing students for employment in fields related to homemaking. However, the vocational value of the regular work in home economics should not be overlooked. Not only the skills taught but the emphasis on cleanliness, orderliness, and suitable appearance add to the students' qualifications as prospective workers. In New York State the Regents' Inquiry found that many pupils taking courses in commercial work were also taking courses in home economics in the belief that certain phases of this work would help them to get jobs.

The availability of home economics.—Home and family life are perhaps nowhere more important than in an agricultural environment, and the value of home economics instruction for rural pupils is scarcely open to question. It can make contributions of great social, economic, and educational significance and add to the joy and purposiveness of family life. As John Dale Russell has pointed out, it differs from all other types of vocational instruction in that it cannot possibly be overproduced. "There is no danger of turning out too many people well equipped with all the information and skills necessary for success in homemaking activities." Since homemaking is a co-operative enterprise, much of the content of home economics has value for boys as well as for girls, and in Virginia and some other states efforts are being made to extend instruction to boys as rapidly as possible.

Despite its value, home economics instruction is by no means universally available in rural high schools. Because the statistics on home economics departments are not broken down to show the size of the community in which they are located, it is impossible to say exactly how many rural high schools offer the subject. Indeed, except in the case of vocational agriculture—where it may be presumed that practically all the departments are in rural areas—it is impossible to give exact figures on the availability of any vocational subject in rural schools. Russell's study of vocational education, made in 1938, indicated that home economics, either in a federally reimbursed or in a nonreimbursed program, is offered in approximately two-thirds of the high schools of the United States. It has since been added in many schools. However, because many states require a minimum enrolment before approving a department, a high percentage of the schools which do not offer home economics is in rural areas.

The availability of home economics varies considerably among the states. In Washington and Tennessee all girls attending high school are required to take a year of homemaking instruction. In both Utah and Delaware every accredited high school offers home economics; in California all but a very few small schools offer it. On the other hand, in Kentucky, New Mexico, and some other states only about half of the high schools include home economics in their program.

As has been mentioned, minimum enrolment requirements repre-

sent one of the most serious obstacles to the extension of the program in rural schools. Lack of adequate federal grants has also restricted its spread. In the past the program in home economics has been relatively poorly supported as compared with those in agriculture and trades and industries. The percentage of federal funds available for home economics education has now been sharply increased, however, and states and local school districts are giving the subject an increasing amount of support.

OTHER TYPES OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

The desirability of including trade and industrial training in the rural high-school program has already been emphasized. Every rural boy should have the opportunity to test his aptitude for industrial work. The large group of youth who will migrate to cities in search of economic opportunity will be unfairly handicapped in seeking employment if they have not acquired some initial vocational competence. Furthermore, many youth who remain in rural areas will seek industrial employment in near-by towns and villages on either a part-time or a full-time basis. The amount of industrial employment in rural areas is by no means negligible. In New York State in 1929 about one-ninth of the wage jobs in manufacturing were in nonindustrial counties.

The difficulties of offering trade and industrial education in rural schools are, however, serious. The needed equipment is expensive, and in small classes the per-pupil cost of instruction is extremely high. Most rural high schools feel that the program is beyond their means even when allowance is made for federal financial assistance. In the past, trade and industrial education has been unnecessarily expensive because of federal insistence that a highly specific type of training be offered in order to qualify for federal reimbursement. Few rural schools can afford either the equipment or the staff which would be necessary to provide highly specialized training in many different fields.

In consequence, despite the desirability of trade and industrial training, it is available at present in only a few rural schools. Here and there exceptionally fine programs are being offered. The Ridgefield High School, in Ridgefield, Washington, offers its more mature

students a prevocational course which covers elementary carpentry; gas-engine operation; electricity, including wiring, line work, and armature winding; tool-room work and steel-lathe operation. In addition to exploring and developing some skill in these fields, the boys study shop mathematics, personal budgets, insurance and taxes, and their rights and responsibilities as workers.

The White Haven School, which is located in Shelby County, Tennessee, not far from Memphis, has a comprehensive trade and industrial program which provides four years of training in any of the following fields: welding and sheet metal, woodworking, machine shop, drafting (architectural and mechanical drawing), electrical work, automobile mechanics, and painting. Students spend three hours a day throughout their high-school careers in one vocational department. Much of their remaining work is in closely related fields, but the school insists on four years of English and offers a diversified curriculum.

A very elaborate set-up is, of course, required by such a program as White Haven's. In addition to teachers in each field, over forty trained assistants are available to provide instruction in special phases of work. Nevertheless, White Haven's program undoubtedly goes a long way toward carrying its own cost. The shops constitute a group of factories and a mechanical service organization for the rural schools of Shelby County. In connection with their work students build all needed school furniture and keep school buildings and equipment in repair.

Educationally, industrial training gains rather than loses by being centered around useful work wherever practicable. There is danger, however, in confining the students to such work as needs to be done unless it is sufficiently diverse to insure a well-balanced program; the educational purpose of the work must not be lost to sight.

Regional vocational training centers.—In Montana, Connecticut, and a number of other states trade and industrial training is available at regional schools, which serve a group of school districts. In one or two cases a single school serves an entire state. Some of these schools are properly called "trade schools," but many of the recently established schools provide opportunities for general education as well as the vocational training for which they are specially equipped,

and educators agree that this is a desirable arrangement. According to John Dale Russell, for example, "the subjects required for a suitable program of general education at the senior high school and junior college level should regularly be offered in these regional schools." The Regents' Inquiry recommended that, in any area of less than fifty thousand population, vocational training centers should be developed by building up the vocational departments of existing secondary schools rather than by establishing separate technical institutions, and the 1938 Montana legislative act providing for the development of training centers in that state is based on the same philosophy. Upon the application of their boards of trustees high schools maintaining a vocational training department "with facilities for additional enrolment" may be designated as vocational training centers by the State Board for Vocational Education. Montana youth sixteen to twenty-one attending such centers have their tuition paid by the county in which they reside. By the end of the 1940 school year four high schools had been designated as resident training centers, three in auto mechanics and general shop and one in carpentry.

There are many problems to be solved in the development of regional schools—in connection not only with their program but with their location, the control of expenses, their relationship to other educational institutions, and students' living arrangements and transportation—and much further experimentation is necessary before completely satisfactory schools emerge. The extension of trade and industrial education appears to depend on the further development of regional schools, upon the enlargement of rural high schools generally, and upon the evolution of types of industrial training which are not beyond the means of rural schools of average size and wealth.

The diversified occupations program.—The diversified occupations program, already discussed in chapter v, represents one promising means of making trade and industrial education available in some rural high schools. This program was inaugurated in 1931 in order to facilitate the provision of training for a variety of occupations in small communities "where the demand for workers in any one occupation is too limited to justify the establishment of training courses

in single trades." Under the program students work half-time in some commercial or industrial establishment and go to school half-time under the direction of a co-ordinator who has both qualifications for teaching and a knowledge of business and industry. Half of a student's time in school is devoted to individualized study specifically related to his field of employment, the other half to regular academic courses.

The diversified occupations program has many important advantages for small communities. It permits schools to provide effective training in a wide variety of occupational fields without the necessity of furnishing a great deal of expensive equipment. Students secure the benefit of vocational preparation in which practical experience and study are nicely balanced and closely correlated. In nearly all communities a high percentage of diversified occupations students have subsequently been placed in the fields for which they were trained. Widespread adoption of the program should terminate the anomalous situation existing when many rural communities find it necessary to import trained workers from near-by cities while many of their own youth are looking for work.

It has, however, certain weaknesses and dangers. The highly specific type of training it calls for may result in a narrow program and is useless unless directed toward actual employment opportunities. It is essential that the instruction be as broad as possible, without sacrificing practicality, and that it be based on a careful study of the employment situation and trend. Without careful administration the program can easily lead to a breakdown of fair labor standards and the exploitation, rather than the education, of students. It requires a capable and broadly experienced co-ordinator, vigilant school supervision, and an advisory committee representative of all interested groups in the community.

Only a few of the communities which have undertaken diversified occupations programs are rural in the strict sense of the word (with a population of less than 2,500). One town of 1,800 in Alabama has developed a satisfactory program by employing a co-ordinator on a half-time basis. Two Michigan communities have jointly employed a co-ordinator.

Business education in rural schools.—Although business and com-

mercial education has developed without federal assistance, it has become a part of the curriculum of many rural schools. The Regents' Inquiry found business training generally available in New York's smaller agricultural communities. In various parts of the country there have been complaints that too many rural students are enrolled in business courses, considering the present nature and objectives of such courses. Most of the courses are strictly vocational in character and concentrate almost exclusively on the skills involved in stenography or bookkeeping. Even when allowance is made for the wide applicability of these skills and the rapid turnover in many business and office occupations, studies in several states have shown that too many rural students are taking business courses in relation to the number of employment opportunities available. It must be recognized, however, that many students take typing and, to a lesser extent, bookkeeping, for nonvocational purposes.

Many facts point to the need for developing a broader type of business education program. A recent study made by the Maryland State Department of Education shows that "almost two-thirds of both males and females employed in the clerical field are engaged in general office work rather than in jobs which require a knowledge of particular skills in the use of office machines and systems." Thus purely from the point of view of vocational utility it appears desirable to replace the present highly specific business courses with more general ones. To be of maximum interest and usefulness, the new courses should be adapted to the business practices of farm and village as well as city. At least a fourth of all rural students will be absorbed in agriculture, which requires business training. Many more will engage in business and industrial occupations in small communities. Some of these youth will have managerial responsibilities or start small businesses of their own, so that the fundamentals of operating a business should not be neglected.

Finally, the general, as over and against the vocational, aspects of business education deserve more emphasis. Business courses should be broadened and integrated more closely with the rest of the school program. The economic, social, and personal aspects of business education now receive far too little attention. Students should be given some general knowledge of business practices and interrelation-

ships and training in consumer buying and in budgeting their own expenditures. When these aspects of business education are considered, the subject dovetails nicely with social science, mathematics, and home economics. Some encouragement may be derived from the fact that the business course which has shown the most rapid increase in enrolment in recent years is the broadest one now offered, elementary business training. It is still far less generally available, however, than shorthand and bookkeeping.

Correlation in vocational education.—One of the most encouraging trends in vocational education is the growing co-operation between different vocational departments, the most notable example of which is the correlation of agriculture and home economics. In various parts of the country, especially in the South, teachers in these two fields have co-operatively developed joint units or courses in farming and homemaking for boys and girls. In a typical unit the home economics teacher instructs the group in planning food supplies for the family. The agricultural teacher then instructs it in raising the livestock, grains, fruits, and vegetables called for by the plan. Finally, the home economics teacher provides instruction in canning various products and in serving balanced meals. Similar joint units have been worked out for such diversified aspects of rural living as planning economic security, maintaining family health, providing sanitary conditions in the home, planning family living and co-operation, and conserving human and material resources.

There has also been some co-operation between home economics and trade and industrial teachers in training girls who are preparing for work in the field of household service. Vocational agriculture and trade and industrial teachers have worked together in training prospective workers in greenhouses and landscaping projects. The extension of such collaboration is essential if rural schools are to make the most of their slender resources to provide an effective and well-rounded vocational program.

Limitations of the rural school vocational program.—The limitations of the programs in each of the vocational subjects offered in rural schools have already been detailed. In general, they suffer from lack of breadth. They seldom contribute what they could to the student's

general education or foster the flexibility and adaptability necessary in a world of rapid occupational shifts. As a result of being too specific they neglect many vocational areas of importance. As has been mentioned, few business education programs provide instruction in operating small businesses. Yet many opportunities exist in villages and rural areas for the management of gas stations, automobile repair shops, and many other types of services and stores. Most agriculture programs neglect the possibilities in occupations relating to agriculture. Yet it is estimated that each year 150,000 people begin work in businesses related to farming as compared to 200,000 entering farming itself. Since colleges of agriculture graduate only a few thousand students each year, it may be assumed that there are many opportunities in these related fields for youth with no more than a high-school education. It is true that no one of the scores of occupations related to agriculture absorbs a great many workers in any given community, so that the provision of a highly specific type of training requires considerable ingenuity. It has been suggested that a co-operative apprentice training program, similar to diversified occupations, might be developed for many agricultural occupations, with youth placed as farm co-operative helpers, greenhouse workers, creamery helpers, stock shippers and buyers, fruit packers, salesmen for seeds, etc. The possibilities of such a program should be explored, and the regular agriculture program should be broad enough to give youth some acquaintance with, and a minimum preparation for, occupations related to agriculture.

In most rural high schools the limitations of the vocational program considered as a whole are even graver than those of the individual subject offerings. Comparatively few rural schools offer a well-rounded program of vocational preparation. The result is that most rural youth are denied the opportunity to explore a number of different occupational fields and to obtain the type of vocational preparation which suits their inclinations and needs. Even in the wealthy state of New York, the Regents' Inquiry found that the vocational program in most rural high schools is confined to agriculture, commerce, and, in a lesser number of cases, home economics.

The difficulties which small rural high schools face in broadening their vocational education program cannot be minimized. As they

increase in size, it will, of course, become easier for them to offer better-balanced vocational programs. But in view of the costliness of providing many types of vocational preparation for a few students, particularly in sparsely settled states, there should be further experimentation with regional schools having special facilities for vocational education.

There should also be further experimentation to discover practical ways of expanding the vocational program in rural high schools generally. Many educators believe that less expensive methods of teaching agriculture could readily be developed. Further consideration should be given to making certain vocational programs wholly or partly self-supporting, as is the trade and industrial program at the White Haven School. There should be additional experimentation with informal co-operative arrangements in which youth get some of their education in school, some on the job. Correspondence courses might be employed to some extent in teaching certain occupations. Finally, it has been suggested that circuit teachers be utilized in sparsely settled areas to provide instruction in such fields as the public service occupations.

Too much must not be expected of rural school vocational programs even when they reach their fullest development. They can provide exploratory opportunities, orient each student to the occupational field of his choice, and give him some initial competence. But highly specific training for the vast majority of jobs will have to be provided by other educational institutions, apprentice programs, and private industry itself.

THE FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA AND 4-H CLUBS

Over two hundred thousand boys in 6,300 high schools are enrolled as members of a national organization for students of vocational agriculture, the Future Farmers of America. There is a parallel organization, the New Farmers of America, for Negro boys studying agriculture.

The purpose of both these organizations is to develop qualities of character, co-operativeness, and leadership in its members that will enable them to make valuable contributions to rural community life. The work of the club, like that in vocational agriculture,

is built around learning by doing. Each school chapter plans an activity program designed to contribute to the welfare of its community. During the 1938-39 school year nearly 3,500 chapters engaged in conservation work. Seventeen hundred concentrated on fire prevention. Other typical activities include livestock, poultry, and crop improvement; beautification campaigns; pest control; sponsorship of co-operatives; and the operation of community events, such as fairs.

The Future Farmers of America has been subject to considerable criticism because it is nationally sponsored by the United States Office of Education. Many educators feel that the extra-curriculum activities of high-school pupils should always grow out of local interests and point to the danger of a national organization's falling into the hands of leaders interested in exploiting it for publicity, propaganda, or political purposes. In addition, it has been urged that the club is subject to commercialization, that it may prove a divisive influence in the school, and that alumni chapters may attempt to interfere with school administration. While these criticisms are not to be disregarded, except for the charge of commercialism they represent potential rather than actual weaknesses; and there is a definite trend away from the tie-ups between the F.F.A. and commercial organizations at the present time. The dangers pointed to can be prevented from materializing if rural people and local school administrators are vigilant. The very real contribution the F.F.A. is making to the development of good rural citizenship would seem to justify its continuation.

Educational activities of 4-H clubs.—In activities and membership the F.F.A. to some extent overlaps the 4-H Club, which is sponsored by the Co-operative Agricultural Extension Service, an organization, to be further discussed in chapters x and xiii, through which the United States Department of Agriculture, the land-grant colleges, local governments, and rural people themselves join hands to work for a better rural life. The 4-H Club, too, aims at the development of good rural citizenship; it, too, stresses learning by doing. In 1940 more than 1,400,000 rural boys and girls, ten to twenty-one years of age, were members of approximately eighty thousand local 4-H Club groups. Since older youth have a tendency to drop out of the 4-H

Club, separate organizations have been started for them in more than two thousand communities. The work of these organizations for older youth and young adults will be discussed in chapter xii.

The 4-H Club program centers around practical farm, homemaking, and community projects. In both 1939 and 1940, 4-H Club members undertook approximately 2,750,000 such projects and carried three-fourths of them through to successful completion. For their individual projects boys may choose to raise a farm animal, cultivate an acre devoted to some staple crop, plant a garden, or wire the farmstead for electricity. Among girls food and clothing projects are most popular. In 1939 food projects emphasized the dietary needs of the family and the use of home-grown foods, and hundreds of thousands of girls planned nutritious meals and canned fruits, vegetables, and meats, in some cases putting up enough food for the entire family. Almost as many girls undertook a variety of clothing projects designed to teach them how to dress well at small cost. But not all girls confined themselves to such feminine domains; many chose projects which enabled them to prove their prowess on the farm. The grand champion beef animal at the 1940 International Live Stock Exposition was exhibited by a girl. Their individual projects show rural boys and girls how to economize and in many cases enable them to earn money. A number of youth have accumulated enough money to go to college through the sale of things they have made and grown in connection with their 4-H Club work. But the youth must assume the risk and responsibility which the possibility of profit entails, and therein, perhaps, lies the chief educational value of the individual projects. If a boy undertakes a livestock project, he is expected to buy and tend his own farm animal. He may seek advice from his family, from the local representative of the Extension Service, or from the club's volunteer adult leader, who is generally a farmer, homemaker, or teacher; but the primary responsibility is his own.

In addition to learning how to do things for themselves, 4-H Club members get valuable experience in working and planning together. They assume a considerable degree of responsibility in connection with their meetings and, like members of the F.F.A., engage in many community projects. Typical activities include the landscaping of

schoolyards and public buildings, the production and sale of disease-free seed at reasonable prices, and the promotion of county-wide soil and livestock campaigns. During 1939 more than fifty thousand 4-H Club demonstration teams, trained by Extension Service agents, strove to hasten the adoption of improved farming and homemaking practices in their communities.

The 4-H clubs, like the F.F.A., have certain critical shortcomings. Several studies have shown that they have not succeeded in reaching enough boys and girls from low-income families. Locally and nationally their work has been subject to undesirable commercial exploitation. Contests among 4-H Club boys and girls have been overemphasized, and the prizes offered at various local events, state fairs, and the International Live Stock Exposition are often so large that winning a prize assumes more importance than accomplishing a given objective because of its inherent desirability and educational value. The Advisory Committee on Education justifiably criticizes these competitive and individualistic excesses. It is essential that the 4-H clubs be given administrative direction which will enable them to overcome these important weaknesses.

The 4-H clubs and the schools.—In many places the 4-H Club is tied up, to some extent at least, with a near-by rural school, and educators, are agreed that this is a desirable arrangement. The school's emphasis on basic general principles often adds to the educational value of 4-H Club projects, and the projects in turn enrich the school activity program and vivify the work in agriculture and home economics. There are, however, certain obstacles to school-4-H Club tie-ups. In Mississippi a number of schools require the 4-H Club meetings to be held during the activity period, which puts the club in competition with so many organizations that membership is greatly reduced. In Delaware, on the other hand, 4-H clubs were removed from the schools because enthusiasm at the start of the school year brought many boys and girls into the club who had no real interest in its program and later dropped out. In most places, however, it is feasible and desirable to integrate the 4-H Club work with the activity program of the school.

In particular, every effort should be made to see that there is no friction between the 4-H Club and the Future Farmers of America.

In many communities the two organizations have disregarded each other and in a few places they have dissipated their energies in profitless competition. The utmost co-operation between two organizations so closely related in objectives and membership is clearly desirable. In some states teachers of vocational agriculture train older students as 4-H Club leaders and from time to time participate in 4-H Club programs. Here and there 4-H and F.F.A. clubs have worked together for the success of community fairs and livestock shows. Such co-operative arrangements should be extended.

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CHAPTER VII

THE EDUCATION OF TEACHERS
FOR RURAL SCHOOLS

INDISPENSABLE to the realization of the richer, less formal type of rural school program sketched in this report are better-qualified, better-prepared, and better-satisfied teachers. At both the elementary- and the secondary-school levels most rural teachers face unusually difficult assignments. Teachers in one-room schools must ordinarily instruct children in six to eight different grades. Rural teachers in general receive far less help than their city colleagues in working out programs which meet the needs of their pupils. Textbooks and state courses of study are usually prepared from the viewpoint of urban conditions and needs, and professionally qualified administrators and supervisors are ordinarily not available to help with the task of adapting them and devising supplementary material. Rural teachers seldom have the benefit of well-equipped classrooms and adequate supplies of instructional materials.

Everywhere, but especially in rural areas, the teacher's task has been made immeasurably more difficult by the school's attempt to serve the emotional and physical, as well as the intellectual, needs of its pupils and to relate itself more intimately to the community it serves. In cities experts are often available to relieve teachers of many responsibilities in connection with special phases of work, such as guidance. In the typical rural school the teacher must be prepared to give her pupils help in almost every area. Similarly, the demands of school-community relations are ordinarily heavier in the country than in the city. The rural teacher must be able to pull her weight—and if possible exercise leadership—in the adult affairs of the community she serves.

To fulfil such responsibilities the modern rural teacher must have exceptional personal qualities and ample preparation for her work. She must possess ingenuity, initiative, and self-reliance. She must understand children and adults, know how to deal with them, and—

if her daily schedule is not to sap her strength—enjoy dealing with them. She must be oriented to rural sociology and have an intimate knowledge of the particular community she serves. Because she must teach many subjects and advise pupils on a wide variety of problems, she must have a broad cultural background and a sound understanding of the contemporary world.

Far from being so prepared for her work, as chapter ii brought out, the typical rural teacher, from the point of view of personal qualifications, education, and experience, is at the foot of her profession. She has had less general and professional education than her city colleague, is less experienced, and has spent a shorter time on her current job. Teachers in one- and two-room schools, who face particularly exacting assignments, as a group have the greatest deficiencies of all.

The percentage of well-qualified rural teachers is constantly increasing, however, and many indications point to an improvement even more rapid in the future. On the part of educators and laymen alike there is a growing awareness of the importance of rural teachers being better prepared for their responsibilities. In many states certification requirements for rural teachers have been raised, and there is a pronounced upward trend in the amount of training rural teachers receive. The declining birth rate and the depression-born tendency of teachers to hold their jobs longer have decreased the number of openings in city schools. In consequence more well-prepared and able young people than ever before are entering rural teaching service. Furthermore, as the developments reported in this chapter will indicate, increased attention is being given to the kind of preparation prospective rural teachers should receive. Better-conceived programs for those preparing for rural teaching service are emerging in many teacher-education institutions.

Securing better candidates for rural teaching.—Securing better teachers for rural schools involves more than the improvement and lengthening of the teacher preparatory program, however. It is equally important to secure better human material by making rural teaching more attractive and by developing procedures for selecting the best-qualified individuals from among the available candidates. In infrequent cases, as a consequence of unsatisfactory experiences

with teachers, rural people have lost faith in the value of extensive preparation for prospective teachers. It should be recognized, however, that in many instances lack of success in teaching was due not to the amount or quality of preparation but to individual personality traits and an inability to adjust to the requirements of rural communities.

Rural schools have not been able to attract or hold enough able teachers in the past primarily because salary, tenure, and living conditions in rural areas have all suffered in comparison with conditions prevailing in cities. Rural people, the states, and the nation must face the necessity of offering salaries that will attract capable young people to careers as rural teachers and compensate them for extensive preparation for their work. Salaries paid rural teachers must be higher and more nearly in line with those paid by urban schools. Several states have helped their rural population to meet these requirements by establishing state-wide minimum salaries and providing financial assistance for paying them. In California the minimum salary for teaching is now \$1,320. Unless the compensation for rural teaching is increased, the imposition of higher standards of preparation may actually result in a lowering of the quality of future personnel. Many promising students may give up the idea of teaching in rural schools because of the disparity between the exacting requirements for the work and its rewards.

At the same time that rural communities increase the salary scales in their schools, they must make a genuine effort to improve the conditions under which teachers live and work. Retirement and tenure laws must be improved, and, what is perhaps even more important, the coercive and constrictive claims many rural communities now make on their teachers' private lives must be relaxed. While teachers must possess moral integrity and should be happy to participate in community activities, beyond any question in many places excessive demands are now made upon them. Intelligent, sensitive, high-spirited young people—and they are precisely the type rural communities want to attract—may be expected to shun an environment in which they do not have a reasonable amount of personal, social, and intellectual freedom.

Improved selection procedures must also be developed to sift the

applicants whom better conditions will attract to rural schools. In the past, because the demand for teachers almost always exceeded the supply, rural people could not lay down too many requirements regarding the personal qualifications of prospective teachers. What influence they were able to exert was devoted largely to raising formal academic requirements to a decent minimum. Today it is possible to be more selective because a greater number of applicants are interested in rural teaching; and it is imperative to consider applicants' health, emotional stability, and personality structure as well as their intellectual ability and academic preparation. Vermont now has a well-organized program for recruiting, selecting, and guiding students with the personal and intellectual qualities which presage success in teaching. Much more work needs to be done in determining what these qualities are and in developing procedures and instruments for selecting the students who possess them.

However, the demands for men and women growing out of the defense movement are certain to have far-reaching influences on the available supply of teachers. It is to be expected that many of the steps that have been taken to improve the quality of teaching service in rural schools will be retarded, and it seems probable that in some respects there will be an actual loss of hard-won gains representing years of effort.

The special needs of prospective rural teachers.—As a part of a balanced program for securing able teachers for rural schools, the importance of the preparation of teachers can scarcely be overemphasized. Many educational studies have shown that teachers tend to teach as they themselves were taught unless they learn and practice improved methods while preparing themselves for teaching. Thus, if poor or mediocre procedure is not to be perpetuated indefinitely, prospective teachers must become familiar with modern educational concepts and practices during their preservice preparation. During this period, too, prospective rural teachers must acquire some understanding of rural society and of what they and the rural school can contribute to it. They must learn how to draw on local resources in planning or adapting their program of instruction.

There is wide difference of opinion as to the type of teacher-education program best adapted to the achievement of these objectives

and some disagreement as to the objectives themselves. A few teacher-education institutions insist that the needs of prospective rural teachers call for no special consideration, because the ends of American education are everywhere the same. Granting that they are, it appears undeniable that rural and urban teachers face different conditions and must employ different means. Even though the similarities between rural and urban education are numerous and significant, the differences, as has been maintained throughout this report, are important, too, and are not to be disregarded. The rural teacher faces special problems in formulating an instructional program keyed to the experience, interests, and needs of her pupils. Particularly if she has children from several different grades, she faces difficulties in organizing the work of her room. A teacher-education program can scarcely be defended if it fails to prepare prospective rural teachers for such basic tasks as these.

Sometimes the failure to give special consideration to the needs of rural teachers is justified on the basis of financial necessity or a rapid decrease in the number of one-room schools in the area served by a particular teacher-education institution. But the orientation of prospective rural teachers to the special requirements of their work is a fundamental responsibility of the teacher-education institution and not simply a frill; and such orientation is needed by all prospective rural teachers, not simply by those who will teach in small schools.

Three types of teacher preparatory programs.—The great majority of teacher-education institutions recognize the necessity of meeting the special requirements of prospective rural teachers, but they differ among themselves on the way to do it. In general, the programs now offered fall into three groups: (1) general programs with some special courses for prospective rural teachers, (2) special rural curriculums, and (3) integrated curriculums.

The first two types of programs, both of which provide for some degree of differentiation in the preparation of rural teachers, are by far the most common. In 1935, of 184 state teachers colleges and normal schools engaged in the education of elementary-school teachers, 84 per cent offered either some special courses or one or more completely differentiated curriculums for students preparing for positions in rural service.

1. *General program with special rural courses.*—In approximately fifty of these schools all students took essentially the same program, but one, two, or several special courses were available for those preparing to teach in rural areas. These schools proceed on the theory that all prospective elementary-school teachers need the same basic preparation and that the most effective, economical way to provide it is through courses open to the entire student body. At the same time the special requirements of prospective rural teachers are recognized and provided for in special courses.

These special courses, both in these schools and in institutions which offer sharply differentiated rural curriculums, are of three sorts. First, and most common, are *professional courses* designed to orient students to the special educational adjustments required in rural schools. Professional courses are offered in rural school practice teaching, observation, administration, management, curriculum, and methods. Second are *background courses* in rural sociology, economics, and community activities, designed to add to the students' understanding of the rural environment itself. Finally, some teacher-education institutions offer *differentiated courses in one or more subject-matter fields* to acquaint students with the best methods of presenting certain subjects to rural children. Differentiated courses are most commonly offered in reading and English, agriculture and nature study, health and physical education, music, home economics, industrial arts, and fine arts.

There is much to commend in the type of teacher preparatory program which provides basically the same curriculum for all students and yet makes some provision for the special requirements of prospective rural teachers. As its proponents claim, it takes account of the common demands of all teachers and the special requirements of rural teachers in economical fashion, providing only as much differentiation as appears to be necessary. In practice, however, the program often proves to have serious weaknesses. At many schools, because special rural courses are offered, rural educational conditions and problems tend to be ignored in general courses. Since what can be accomplished in the one, two, or three rural courses available is distinctly limited, this is undesirable even when students take the maximum amount of specialized rural work. It is a crucial weakness

when students destined to teach temporarily or permanently in rural areas neglect the rural courses altogether, as in fact many of them do. In one typical midwestern state teachers college, 80 per cent of whose two-year graduates are placed in rural areas, only 20 per cent of the students elect rural courses. While schools offering a general curriculum and some special rural courses may make a good program available to their students, each year many of their graduates begin to teach in rural schools with little or no special preparation.

2. *Differentiated rural curriculums.*—In 1935, 115 of the 184 state institutions preparing elementary-school teachers offered one or more differentiated curriculums for rural teachers. Such curriculums, of course, permit adequate attention to be given to the special problems which will face rural teachers; their entire emphasis is on the rural situation. But differentiated curriculums, like individual rural courses, may be, and often are, disregarded by students who should take them. In nearly all teacher-education institutions where such curriculums are available, too few students are enrolled in them in relation to the number who will actually teach in rural schools. Thus these institutions, too, graduate many students who begin to work in rural schools with little knowledge of the special requirements of their job.

Differentiated curriculums are subject to certain additional weaknesses. Because the common educational needs of rural and urban teachers far outnumber the special requirements of either group, the provision of separate curriculums inevitably involves a great deal of wasteful duplication. It increases the amount of departmentalization, and, unfortunately, departmentalization often fosters staff jealousies and antagonisms. The complete separation of prospective teachers for city and country overemphasizes the rural-urban cleavage and creates a parallel cleavage within the teaching profession itself. In practice, too, it generally operates to the disadvantage of the prospective rural teachers, for in most schools having separate departments the rural staff considered as a whole is below the faculty par in training, teaching, and research ability.

3. *Integrated curriculums.*—While programs which involve some degree of differentiation for rural and urban teachers still predomi-

nate, their weaknesses have been particularly conspicuous in recent years, when unprecedented numbers of young men and women, many of whom have taken no rural courses, have been placed in rural schools. It is not surprising, therefore, that there is now a tendency in teacher-education institutions "to specialize rural education less sharply and make it more available to the student body as a whole." Already apparent in 1933 at the time of the national survey of the education of teachers, this tendency has gained momentum in recent years. In Vermont, where approximately nine-tenths of all teachers begin their careers in rural schools, all normal-school students are required to take courses and do observation and practice teaching in rural schools, and in Connecticut very similar requirements are in effect.

New York has made the most radical departure of all. In 1932 the normal schools which had assumed responsibility for the preparation of rural teachers all employed differentiated curriculums. Surveys made in that year revealed that approximately 90 per cent of the graduates of these institutions were securing their first positions in rural schools. To meet this situation a program of experimentation and adjustment was begun which resulted in the development of an integrated curriculum for all students, which was adopted on a statewide basis in 1935.

The integrated curriculum is based on the assumption that, since a high percentage of the graduates of certain teacher preparatory institutions will teach in rural schools and since it is impossible to determine these students in advance, all students must be prepared to teach in rural schools. It attempts to give all prospective teachers a knowledge of the adjustments required in rural teaching, both in the presentation of subject matter and in the organization of the school program. Materials in rural education are included in all courses, subject matter and professional. Wherever possible these materials are integrated into the curriculum; in other cases they are covered in separate units. In one way or another, however, they are incorporated in courses and a program taken by the entire student body.

In New York teacher-education institutions which have adopted an integrated curriculum, separate, specialized departments have been abandoned. Specialists to assist in the presentation of rural

materials have been added to the staff of every institution in the state which prepares elementary-school teachers. But such materials are also regarded as the concern of the entire faculty, as of the entire student body, and no staff member feels free to disregard the special problems involved in teaching in an open-country or village environment. Every student preparing for an elementary-school assignment must secure at least one-third of his practice teaching in a one-teacher school. Every graduate of an institution offering an integrated program is now prepared, theoretically and practically, for the problems he will encounter if his first job is in the country.

An integrated curriculum escapes the more serious weaknesses of differentiated programs for the preparation of rural teachers, and on the basis of more than five years' experience with its program New York is well satisfied with the results it is obtaining. The advocates of an integrated curriculum recognize, however, that it is subject to certain dangers. Rural needs may be neglected as a result of the general focus of all courses, and at least in the years immediately following the adoption of an integrated program—and perhaps indefinitely—rural specialists should be retained or appointed so that the special problems of rural education will receive adequate attention. Great care must be exercised in working out courses which strike a nice balance between general, urban, and rural content.

It is believed that an integrated curriculum is not desirable for the education of rural school administrators and supervisors. Those preparing for leadership in rural education need and want many special courses in rural educational problems, rural economics, and rural sociology, in addition to the basic courses needed by school administrators in city or country. They need and want a maximum amount of contact with rural specialists from every department. Institutions offering advanced work for prospective leaders in the fields of rural education should continue to provide a number of special rural courses.

Promising new trends and emphases.—Both in institutions offering differentiated curriculums and in those offering integrated curriculums several highly promising trends are in evidence in the education of teachers for rural schools.

To equip teachers for the manifold demands of the modern rural

school and to enable them to meet more exacting state certification requirements, longer preparatory programs are being offered in many institutions. Between 1926-27 and 1935, in the 115 state teacher-education institutions offering differentiated programs for prospective rural teachers, the number of one- and two-year rural curriculums decreased and the number of four-year curriculums almost doubled. The number of high-school teacher-training classes and county normal schools is decreasing precipitately. In 1922-23 there were 1,743 such classes and schools spread over twenty-four states and enrolling more than thirty-two thousand students. In 1934-35 there were only 615, all located in eight western and mid-western states. In most of these states high-school teacher-training classes and county normal schools are continuing to decrease in number.

Attention is also being given to improving the quality and balance of the preservice training program. As the Advisory Committee on Education complained, many institutions increased the length of their teacher-education programs without making commensurate improvements in their quality. The Regents' Inquiry disclosed that while 81 per cent of the graduates of liberal arts colleges regarded their general academic preservice training as adequate, only 54-60 per cent of the graduates of normal schools and teachers colleges were satisfied with this aspect of their education. In contrast, 60-62 per cent of the normal-school and teachers-college graduates felt that they had been given enough preservice experience in practice teaching and observation, while only 28 per cent of the liberal arts graduates felt that they had been given enough. Both the normal schools and the teachers colleges, on the one hand, and the liberal arts colleges, on the other, are now attempting to develop better-balanced programs which meet the needs of prospective rural teachers for broad cultural background, subject-matter background, and professional knowledge and experience.

Observation and practice teaching.—Teacher-education institutions of all types are also placing greater stress upon observation and supervised practice teaching in rural schools. There is a marked increase both in the number of institutions offering facilities for observation and practice teaching and in the amount of such experience

which is provided. Many institutions now require students to remain the entire day in the rural schools where they do their practice teaching, and some ask that students live in the communities to which they are assigned.

Students themselves recognize the value of being given firsthand experience in rural schools. Of a group of graduates of state teachers colleges and normal schools questioned by William McKinley Robinson, 90 per cent felt that their practice teaching and observation of rural schools had justified the extra time, effort, and expense it involved.

The schools where students do their observation and practice teaching should orient them to the actual problems and conditions they will face and at the same time give them satisfactory patterns to follow. Neither model schools located on the campuses of teacher-training institutions nor run-of-the-mill rural schools ordinarily fulfil both of these specifications. The tendency now, therefore, is to work with near-by rural schools, thus maintaining satisfactory standards in the schools and providing opportunities for practice teaching. For example, the Eastern Kentucky State College supervises the rural schools in two near-by counties which are visited by students of the college. Vermont has twelve demonstration schools in which prospective rural teachers do their observation work. As another means of increasing the value of observation and practice teaching, many teacher-education institutions are giving their students diversified experience in several types of schools, so that they will be equally at home whether they are assigned to a one-teacher, a two-to four-teacher, or a large consolidated school.

Observation and practice teaching are of maximum value only when students appreciate the full implications of what they see and do and discriminate between good and bad practice. Increasingly, therefore, attempts are being made to integrate students' observation and practice teaching with their more theoretical work. At the same time that students at the West Georgia College do their initial-practice teaching they take a course in materials and methods designed to acquaint them with general principles of classroom organization and management and the philosophy and objectives of the rural school. Instead of confining observation and practice teaching

to the tag end of the teacher-preparation period, many schools now spread the experience over the entire period, giving students a constantly increasing amount of responsibility. Theory supplements practice instead of preceding it. In consequence the student's first-hand experience in rural schools and his academic work are both more meaningful.

Relating the rural school to rural life.—As has been mentioned, many teacher-education institutions require their students to live in the rural communities in which they do their practice teaching. Their object is to orient students to rural social conditions and problems and to give them some opportunity to participate in rural community life. Many institutions realize that it is not enough to equip the prospective rural teacher with effective classroom procedures and techniques. He needs, equally, a vision of what the modern rural school can contribute to rural society.

He needs to understand the ends that an educational program should serve in a rural area under present-day social and economic conditions. He needs to understand the problems the children in those areas face and to know conditions in the environment that create lacks to be overcome or resources to be utilized in achieving the ends sought.

While the preparation of rural teachers must not overemphasize the differences between city and country, it is clear that it must give adequate attention to rural social problems, to the relationship of school and community in rural areas, and to the social resources of rural communities. Recognizing this, a large majority of the institutions preparing prospective rural teachers now offer one or more background courses in rural sociology, rural economics, and rural community activities and relations. An increasing number also provide courses in regional and state problems. The best of these courses not only orient the student to the economic and social conditions of the locality in which he will teach but consider the many practical ways in which the school can contribute to the improvement of rural life.

Here and there teacher-education institutions are attempting to give their students some experience in school-community relations to vivify their study of the subject. Students of the Michigan State Normal College participate in the school and community activities

of the Lincoln Consolidated School, whose program was described in chapter iv. Both through observation and through their own activities they learn how the school can make itself an integral part of the community. In an experimental program in the education of rural teachers undertaken in 1939 in three state-controlled colleges in Georgia particular stress was placed on the role of the school in shaping and improving the life of the community. The University of Georgia arranged with a near-by rural county to determine and demonstrate the contribution the school can make to community betterment. As an intermediary between the university and the county, a co-ordinator was employed who had research, co-ordination, and educational responsibilities. The faculty members of the university's College of Education served as active consultants and participants in the program, and the co-operation of specialists in such fields as public health, social welfare, and sociology was enlisted. All off-campus practice teaching was done in the schools of the county, and graduate-education students preparing to be supervisors served a three-month internship there. The program gave students at the university an opportunity to see at first hand the effect of the school on the community and of the community on the school.

The activities of student rural life clubs.—Informal student activities are also utilized at some teacher-education institutions to orient students to rural social and educational conditions and to prepare them to assume positions of leadership in rural community life. At more than sixty normal schools and teachers colleges there are rural-life clubs which bring together students preparing for rural teaching. In addition to providing valuable social experiences, these clubs give students an opportunity to study, discuss, and participate in rural school-community activities. One of the best of rural-life clubs, the Appleblossom Club of the Central State Teachers College, Mount Pleasant, Michigan, gives performances and talks at rural schools and school consolidation meetings throughout the state. The club has a dramatics association, a choir, a folk-dance group, and an orchestra. A welfare department has distributed clothing to more than 1,500 children and runs a camp where approximately sixty-five youngsters are given a week's camping experience each summer. To

promote the cause of better education in rural areas, the club publishes a newspaper which has a circulation of 2,500 and is the official organ of the Michigan Rural Teachers Association. The club's activities are of real value to many communities and individuals and to the members themselves. In their travel they become acquainted with the social and educational conditions which prevail in various communities in the state. They secure firsthand experience in dealing with both children and adults.

Several other new emphases of teacher-education institutions, more general in character than those which have been discussed, promise to improve the preparation of prospective rural teachers. At teachers colleges, normal schools, and universities throughout the country more stress is being placed on children and child development. Increased attention is given to new subjects in the rural school curriculum, such as health and conservation. While programs must be still further modernized and enriched to meet the needs of today, in most essential respects the preservice education of prospective rural teachers is being improved.

In-service education of rural teachers.—The same factors responsible for raising the standards for entering the teaching profession have focused attention on the necessity for improving the work of teachers now in service. Certification requirements in some states encourage or require teachers to take a certain amount of additional professional training. The need for such training is particularly marked among rural teachers because the preservice preparation of so many of them was inadequate. However, remedying the deficiencies in the preservice education of teachers is not the only, or even the primary, reason for in-service training. Increasingly it is recognized that the "teacher's professional growth and development must be a continuous process." However good his initial preparation may be, to avoid stagnation and improve the quality of his work, the teacher must keep abreast of new findings and developments, both in professional and in subject-matter fields.

State departments of education, local school administrators, and teacher-education institutions are increasingly concerned with improvement of the qualifications of teachers now in service. In many instances special efforts are made to aid teachers in their early years

of service when they face the difficulties of orienting themselves to their jobs and of applying in concrete situations what they have learned in school. To teacher-education institutions in-service work represents a means of being of further help to former students and an invaluable opportunity for keeping in touch with the real problems of rural teachers. Many institutions find that they derive particular benefit from the work they do in the field. Periodic visits to rural schools enable faculty members to key not only their in-service instruction but also their preservice courses and research to the actual situations which confront rural teachers.

Many types of arrangements, formal and informal, have been devised for the provision of in-service training. They include: summer-school courses and workshops; extension courses, sometimes offered by correspondence; state, county, and local conferences; visits to rural schools, demonstration teaching, and conferences; conference days at teacher-education institutions; professional publications; and lectures. The Regents' Inquiry believes that New York teacher-education institutions should go much further than they now do in helping teachers in service. It recommends that supervisory functions be delegated by the state to teacher-education institutions, each institution becoming a center for supervisory assistance in its area.

Field and campus in-service training.—Some of the most valuable in-service work is at present being done in the field. One member of the faculty of the Southeast Missouri State Teachers College devotes his entire time to helping teachers in a small number of counties with their classroom work. The Western State Teachers College, Kalamazoo, Michigan, has made an arrangement in one county which permits the county superintendent to request the services of staff specialists. Reading specialists are most in demand. Many institutions employ demonstration teaching extensively in their in-service work in the field. A group of teachers gather at one school to observe a demonstration and remain for an hour or two of discussion after students are dismissed. In-service work given under such conditions is almost invariably down-to-earth and practical.

Teacher-education institutions bend every effort to make their on-campus in-service work, too, highly practical. Staff members' visits

to rural schools give them a background for building courses which deal with the real problems teachers face. Teachers are sometimes asked to indicate the areas in which they need help, and courses, summer workshops, and conferences are planned on the basis of their replies. In advance of a summer workshop for rural teachers at the University of North Carolina, several participating schools were sent an outline for conducting a school-community survey. The workshop was then devoted to the problems uncovered by the surveys.

At a series of conferences which grew out of in-service extension classes, teachers, county superintendents, and faculty members of Teachers College, University of Nebraska, developed a tentative draft of a "Teachers' Handbook for the Self-appraisal of a Rural Elementary School." A workshop held at the university during the 1940 summer session was then devoted to checking, completing, and revising the handbook. Produced in the course of in-service training, the handbook is now made the basis of further valuable in-service work in individual rural schools and in county extension classes.

Everywhere teachers are participating more actively in their own in-service training. As has been seen, they are frequently consulted in the planning of programs. In addition, more opportunity is provided for contributions from teachers and for discussion not only in workshops but in regular summer-session courses, extension classes, and county institutes. One-day sessions on the campuses of teacher-education institutions are increasingly devoted to discussion groups, conferences, and observation at demonstration schools rather than to lectures.

The preparation of educational materials.—As a logical extension of their activities in the preservice and in-service education of teachers, teacher-education institutions are increasingly interesting themselves in the preparation of curriculum and instructional materials for rural schools. The preparation of such materials is a highly appropriate function for teacher-education institutions. Information and experience gained in the preparation of material which is adapted to the real needs of rural schools are of benefit not only to the institutions themselves but to their former students who are teaching. At land-grant colleges and other teacher-education institutions one of the most effective ways for subject-matter specialists

to disseminate their findings and for educators to apply their ideas is by collaborating in the preparation of materials for use in schools.

The West Georgia College centers all its work in the preparation and use of educational materials in the Carrollton County Materials Bureau. Here are collected a wide range of textbooks, library books, pamphlets, clippings, and visual aids. Students in preservice and in-service courses are given experience in selecting and using these materials and in preparing needed new items. The bureau furnishes materials to teachers in the county for use in their classrooms and makes a special effort to serve committees of teachers at work on educational problems.

The need for experimentation and research.—There is need for much additional experimentation and research in the education of teachers for rural schools. Completely satisfactory programs have not yet emerged at either the preservice or the in-service levels. In view of the many unresolved problems in the education of rural teachers, the present diversity of programs is wholly desirable, and there is need for much further experimentation. There is perhaps an even greater need for evaluative studies of various types of programs. At the present time even in assessing the relative merits of differentiated and integrated curriculums, it is necessary to rely almost exclusively on theoretical considerations and the general impressions of observers.

At land-grant colleges another problem in the education of teachers demands attention. Special requirements have been established by the states and the federal government for the preparation of vocational education teachers in federally reimbursed programs. These requirements are intended to assure that vocational education teachers will be well prepared for their work, but they have resulted in an unnecessarily sharp and undesirable differentiation between their education and that of other teachers. Without making the curriculum for prospective vocational education teachers any less rigorous, it should be possible to integrate it more closely with the basic teacher-education programs of the land-grant colleges.

The education of rural school leaders.—The preparation and in-service training of the leaders of rural education—administrators, supervisors, and helping teachers—deserves far more attention than

it has thus far received. The low professional status of many county superintendents is sometimes cited as a reason for neglecting their needs. But, as W. H. Gaumnitz points out, teacher-education institutions could themselves do a great deal to advance the prestige of the rural superintendency.

It seems to me . . . to be high time to take the county superintendent where and as he is professionally, and to do something to improve his work while he is in office, regardless of how he has come into it, or how short the period of time he is likely to occupy that position. . . .

Why should not each state have, first of all, at least one institution, possibly the state university, which would make careful studies of the nature of and the optimum procedures for attacking the problems of this school officer? With the objective data thus assembled such a center could then evolve a training program which would attract not only those who look toward rural school administration as a field of service but which would undertake the more immediate task of raising the professional efficiency of those already occupying these school offices.

A small but growing number of teacher-education institutions are interesting themselves in the education of rural school leaders. A grant from the Rosenwald Fund has enabled the College of Education at the University of Georgia to strengthen its program for the preparation of rural supervisors. The same foundation has helped the South Georgia Teachers College to inaugurate a promising program, very similar to that of the University of Georgia, for training elementary-school principals, county supervisors, and helping teachers. Experienced teachers are selected to prepare themselves for these positions. An individual program of college study is worked out for each candidate on the basis of his experience and needs. All candidates are divided into small groups for intensive periods of field work in demonstration teaching and county supervision. They learn how to demonstrate professional procedures, how to conduct conferences, and, in general, how to help teachers make their instruction more effective. For the field work in county supervision they are assigned as assistants to a successful and experienced county supervisor for practical training in the planning and execution of supervisory work. Each candidate is given certain responsibilities in the county as a whole and in a particular school.

Teacher-education institutions offering in-service training are

making increasing efforts to secure the participation and co-operation of local school administrators and supervisors, particularly in connection with their work in the field. In many cases the person conducting field in-service classes regards himself as an assistant to the local school administrators, since his whole purpose is to help them and the teachers under them to do a better job. By co-operating closely with administrators, those in charge of in-service training put themselves in an advantageous position to influence them and gain prestige valuable for their work with teachers.

The education of rural school-board members.—School-board members represent another group whose educational needs deserve more attention on the part of teacher-education institutions. In the seven Michigan counties in which it is operating, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation has sponsored a special program for school-board members which has already proved very helpful. The biannual meetings called by county school commissioners, formerly confined to problems of finance and legislation, have been enriched by authoritative discussions of the curriculum and instructional problems and by demonstrations of good teaching practice. So that school-board members would have more opportunity for discussion than such large meetings afford, in some counties smaller gatherings have been held at four or five convenient centers. Community meetings have also been conducted in which parents, teachers, and pupils, each from their own point of view, tell board members the improvements which are needed to bring the school in which they are interested up to date. Selected groups of school-board members have taken excursions to near-by schools to observe unusually good programs.

Teacher-education institutions have some opportunity to participate in these phases of the program by making staff members available as consultants and speakers. The final phase of the program is of more direct interest to them. Groups of board members are sent to Northwestern University and the University of Chicago for five-day short courses. These courses give board members prestige and get them away from "the controlling influence of . . . local group pressures." A careful evaluative study has shown that the courses are decidedly successful in changing the attitudes of board members and that they lead ultimately to marked improvements in the

schools. Work with school-board members represents a promising and almost untouched field of activity for enterprising teacher-education institutions.

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CHAPTER VIII

LIBRARY SERVICE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES AND SCHOOLS

VARIATIONS in the provision of library service in different parts of the country are even more marked than variations in school facilities. Differences in the relative ability of cities and rural regions to furnish library service are the most important factors in explaining these variations. The entire pattern of library distribution in the United States suggests that it is in rural areas that the greatest deficiencies in library service exist. America's library problem, like America's educational problem, is essentially a rural one.

The general pattern of library distribution.—There are approximately six thousand public libraries in the United States. Ten states are rather liberally provided with libraries; in about half of these virtually the entire population has access to some form of local library service. Eighteen more states have library service provided for at least half of their residents. It is by no means to be assumed that library service is of uniform quality or that it is equally or easily accessible to everyone in those areas which have libraries. But, disregarding such variations, one may note that library service in some form ranges from practically complete coverage in Massachusetts, Delaware, Vermont, and the District of Columbia to a service which is available to only 14 per cent of the population, as in Mississippi.

The variations in public library facilities are seen somewhat more clearly in terms of regions rather than states. The Far West, comprising the three coastal states and Nevada, has local library districts sufficiently extensive to reach 88.7 per cent of the population. At the other extreme is the southeastern region, with only 36 per cent thus served. In the Northeast 82 per cent of the population have local library service; in the Middle West, 74.1 per cent; in the Northwest, 48.9 per cent; and, in the Southwest, 40.3 per cent. The fifteen southern states, with nearly thirty-five million inhabitants, are most

poorly provided for, and the eight million people along the Pacific Coast are most satisfactorily served.

In general, the states and regions which have large rural populations are the most backward in their provision of library service. While 34 per cent of the nation's population have no form of library service whatever, in rural America the proportion rises to 72 per cent. It has been estimated that "there are still nearly thirty-nine million rural people in the United States who do not have easy access to permanent public library service." In contrast, only 8 per cent of the residents of cities are without such service. In the state of Washington 42 per cent of the population are without library service. Ninety-eight per cent of these people live in rural areas.

These statistics must be interpreted with some caution. They are based on library service locally financed and provided, or "put on a permanent basis through formal action or some local appropriation," and do not take into account the widespread activities of the federal government, especially through its provision of W.P.A. libraries. Well over eleven and a quarter million people, almost all of whom live in rural areas, are reported served by such libraries. On the other hand, the phrase "provision of local library service" has been quite liberally interpreted, and no account has been taken of the inequalities in the kind of service furnished or of the groups—notably many of the Negroes in the South—for whom local library service is all but proscribed. Were carefully constructed indices available, they would reveal as dramatically as the existing statistics the disparity between urban and rural library service.

Reasons for deficiencies in rural library service.—The same factors which handicap rural people in providing educational facilities make it difficult for them to support libraries: as a group they are poor, and, because of the number of children and old people in the population, the productive-age group carries an unusually heavy economic load. The comparatively sparse settlement of rural areas increases the cost and difficulty of providing every type of social and educational service. In the South the cost of such services is further increased by the necessity of duplicating facilities for the two races.

These factors affect the provision of library facilities even more seriously than they do the provision of schools. The education of the

young, the primary function of schools, is mandatory; the library, on the other hand, is a permissive institution. In the competition for the available tax dollars the library loses out to the school and other public agencies performing services which are regarded as indispensable. Furthermore, as a result of the way the library has developed in this country, from the time of its origin in New England until recent years the provision of library service has been looked upon as a purely local concern. Local communities were neither required to furnish library service nor given financial aid by the states or the nation in furnishing it.

The need for rural library service.—The importance of the provision of library service to rural communities and schools scarcely requires stress. The deficiencies in the cultural resources of rural areas increase the need for library service. All the available data suggest that most rural families possess relatively small amounts of reading material and that the periodicals and books which are available are limited in variety and unsubstantial in character. Rural areas have similarly limited supplies of the supplementary material many modern libraries furnish, such as pictures and phonograph records. There is a genuine and widespread need in rural areas for libraries which have adequate resources.

In addition to the contributions the rural library can make to the self-education, recreation, and cultural enrichment of individuals, it can add enormously to the value of many group activities. Adult education classes, farm organizations, and groups which get together for study and discussion all require books in connection with their activities.

The desirability of children in rural schools having access to a large variety of reading material has already been discussed. In the better rural schools of today children are expected not to read a few assigned pages in a textbook but to consult many sources and form their own opinions on the basis of all the data and points of view presented. Adequate library facilities contribute not only to their intellectual growth but to the development of initiative and self-reliance. Rural children also need access to a wide variety of suitable recreational reading—fiction, poetry, drama—so that they can develop insight and imagination and extend their own horizons.

The need for pooling resources.—In view of the present deficiencies in rural library service and the need for such service, the provision of library facilities is the most important aspect of the rural library problem. Some of the most successful ways of providing library service in rural areas will therefore be described in the following pages.

All the ways, it will be noted, have one thing in common: the resources of a considerable area have been pooled in the effort to find a unit large and rich enough to furnish library service efficiently. No one can yet say definitely how large a unit should be in terms of population or how much money it should be able to provide before it attempts independent library service. But in most instances autonomous libraries in very small communities have not proved economical or satisfactory. The notion of local responsibility for library service has been superseded by the realization that most small rural political units simply cannot afford to operate independent library systems. The extension of adequate library service to the millions of rural people now without it depends largely upon the pooling of resources and the development of efficient library administrative units.

BRINGING LIBRARY SERVICE TO RURAL AREAS

The most successful development to date in the direction of extending the limits of library service beyond those of the local community is the county library. California and New Jersey have made the greatest progress in developing county libraries; in the former state county libraries are now functioning in all but ten counties. Numerous county libraries have been established in Montana, Wyoming, Utah, some southern states, and Indiana, and this form of library organization is to be found in no less than thirty-seven states. Nevertheless, out of more than three thousand counties in the United States, it is doubtful if more than four hundred and fifty have county libraries operating on as much as one thousand dollars a year.

The county library is best described by analogy with the public library system in a large city. The typical municipal library system consists of a strong central book collection and a number of branches of various types—independent branch buildings, branches in schools,

small collections in stores, factories, hospitals, and other institutions. In addition, there may be bookmobile service to sparsely settled neighborhoods, parks, and other places. The essence of the system is accessibility plus fluidity; books are available in the areas where people live or work, and interlibrary loans assure the reader access to all the library's books, not merely those in the collection closest to home. A county library provides exactly the same sort of service for an entire county.

The predominant emphasis of the county library movement has been on service to rural people, and it has brought them benefits of the greatest significance. The most obvious is the provision of library service itself. As has been said, relatively few small communities could afford to provide any form of library service for themselves if left to their own devices. The few libraries which could be established would find it difficult to provide adequate book collections and to offer satisfactory service. As a member of a county library system, each participating community secures the benefit of a local library collection which is selected and administered by trained personnel and constantly varied by exchanges from a large central book stock. Where, as in California, the county library systems of the state are brought into relationship with one another through the state library, which itself maintains a large book collection, each community has access to an enormous number and variety of books.

Since California has developed its county library system to such a high point of excellence, it is worth while to observe its organization and administration. Typically, the major purpose of the system is to make library service available in areas not being served by municipal or other public libraries. The County Free Library Act of 1911 makes it possible for a county library to be established simply by resolution of the county board of supervisors. Each county library maintains local autonomy but is under the supervision of the state library, which furnishes aid and advice, acts as a clearing-house for information and as an advisory agency in administrative matters, and on request lends books from its collection which are not available in a particular county library.

A county library may be organized to serve either an entire county or those parts of a county not already provided with library service. Municipalities with library service may voluntarily become part of a

county system, as may library districts, union high-school districts, county law libraries, and county teachers libraries. In California and elsewhere county library systems have been elastic enough in their organization and administration to permit participating units to preserve their administrative autonomy if they chose to do so.

The need for regional libraries.—As successful as the county library has proved in many places, its usefulness is limited by the fact that in many rural areas the county is unsatisfactory as a library unit. A county may be too small and poor to provide adequate financial support for a library or too sparsely settled to afford satisfactory concentrations of population where library distribution points may be established. In California two counties have contracted for library service from neighboring counties. In other parts of the country, particularly in the South, counties too small or sparsely settled to serve as satisfactory library units are far more numerous. As Carleton B. Joeckel points out, two-fifths of Georgia's counties have less than ten thousand residents, and three-fifths have no towns of more than twenty-five hundred. When it is realized that two-thirds of the three thousand counties in the United States have no city of five thousand or more population, the need for a library unit larger than the county becomes obvious.

In two cases, Delaware and Rhode Island, Joeckel visualizes the state itself as a satisfactory library unit. "From the viewpoint of mere territorial size," he says, "the development of a Rhode Island Public Library, a Delaware Public Library, each with its appropriate and necessary branches and stations, is entirely within the realm of reason and common sense." A similar proposal is made for New Mexico and Arizona, which present large areas of sparse population.

Regional libraries have already proved their value under a variety of conditions. In 1938 Vermont had 288 libraries, but only 30 received an annual income of more than one thousand dollars; nearly half of the libraries functioned on less than one hundred dollars a year. There was need for using existing library agencies more effectively rather than for establishing new libraries. The solution was the creation of four regional centers for the state, which were given financial aid by the state and put under the general guidance of the State Library Commission.

Under special legislation the commission was empowered "to make

contracts with the duly authorized agents of any municipal corporation or public library for the maintenance of cooperative library service." Special consideration was to be given to extending library service to rural schools and to farm homes. Vermont's system as it has developed is extremely flexible and informal. Existing local libraries may join the system or not, as they choose. Participation, however, has been almost universal; and as a result Vermont's local libraries are now unified in such a way as to make their book resources available over much wider areas and to many more people. All the libraries receive professional supervision and assistance. Each region has a bookmobile to carry a book stock to areas remote from stationary library outlets. Vermont's regional system permits local library units to retain their autonomy and independence, extend the scope of their operations, and improve their service to their own constituencies.

Libraries in the T.V.A. area.—The value of disregarding the boundary lines of local political units in providing rural library service is well illustrated by the library activities of the federal government in the Tennessee Valley Authority area. Libraries were originally organized to bring suitable books and periodicals to workers on T.V.A. projects but later extended service to other residents of the area as well. The co-operation of existing public or school libraries was always solicited. Even when a library was hopelessly inadequate, it was often found that someone connected with it knew what it might and should be and was willing to request its governing body to appropriate money for its improvement. The T.V.A. also supplied financial help. While the co-operation of local libraries was in most instances readily obtained, it has been the experience of the T.V.A. that a regional library program can be instituted most easily in an area where little or no library service previously existed.

The regional library which has been established in Madison, Marshall, and Jackson counties in Alabama is one of the most successful in the T.V.A. area. Prior to 1937, when construction on the Guntersville Dam was undertaken, these counties were almost entirely without library service. The only public library in the area was at Huntsville, and its service area was limited to the community proper. In addition, there were a few school libraries.

Built largely around the Huntsville Library, a three-county program was organized, which it is hoped will continue after T.V.A. employment is ended. Library facilities were established in numerous places, but all were co-ordinated in a well-knit regional scheme. Each individual library provides quarters, equipment, and personnel. The central library at Huntsville co-ordinates its service with that of the other units and supplements their book collections. Arrangements are similar to those which have already been discussed in connection with the county library—deposit stations, book trucks, interlibrary loans, and centralized purchasing. Library service of high quality has been made available for the first time to thousands of rural people in the Guntersville Dam region.

The T.V.A. has contributed four hundred dollars a month for a number of months to this particular library and makes similar contributions to the support of other libraries in the area. While this financial assistance has played some part in the success of the libraries in the T.V.A. area, the organization and administration of the libraries has undoubtedly been an even more important factor. The T.V.A. libraries have demonstrated some of the possibilities of the multiple-county type of library unit.

Securing library service from an existing system.—One of the most satisfactory ways to secure library service in areas which cannot themselves provide it is by arrangement with a system already functioning in a neighboring community. In Indiana a state law permits townships to join libraries in neighboring cities. "The township votes a library tax (usually about half the city rate) for this purpose and is given representation on the managing board of the combined library." Under this arrangement Gary extends service to five townships (including the city of Gary itself), one of which is not contiguous to the city and is in another county. Another common type of arrangement is for a suburban or rural community to contract for paid service from a near-by city library system. Bettendorf, Iowa, secures service from Davenport; Essexville, Michigan, from Bay City; and Glenview, Illinois, from Evanston.

W.P.A.-sponsored libraries.—The federal agency most effective in bringing library service to rural areas previously without it is the Work Projects Administration. As has been mentioned, through its

efforts over eleven million persons, most of them rural, have been provided with direct library service. As of January, 1940, over sixteen thousand individuals were engaged in W.P.A. state-wide library service projects alone. Over a quarter of a million books have been purchased with federal funds, and these are but a fraction of the book collections available in W.P.A.-sponsored libraries.

The main purpose of W.P.A.-sponsored libraries has been to demonstrate the value of library service in the hope of stimulating the provision of service by local communities. The W.P.A. libraries do not follow a uniform pattern but are adapted to local conditions. Sometimes branches and stations are established for the distribution of books; even more frequently bookmobiles are employed. Pack horses are used to transport books to remote deposit stations and to individual readers in the Kentucky mountains.

Because the awakening of interest in library service has been the main object of the W.P.A. libraries, the form of administrative organization has been a secondary consideration. Naturally enough, therefore, there is as yet little evidence of the well-knit, unified, and closely integrated organization that one finds in the better county library systems. Nevertheless, the state-wide W.P.A. projects and many others constitute gropings in the direction of true regional library organization. Among the most interesting projects are those organized to bring library service to a group of counties considered as a single administrative unit. There is, for example, the Tidewater Public Library in Virginia, which serves ten counties, and the central Virginia library service, which is organized to bring library service to the schools of five Virginia counties. Projects of equal promise have been begun in many other parts of the country. In addition to demonstrating the value of library service, the emergency library activities of the W.P.A. have contributed to the development of administrative units providing service in rural areas.

BRINGING LIBRARY SERVICE TO RURAL SCHOOLS

The same reasons which influence rural people over a wide area to pool their resources in providing library service make it desirable for the rural school to co-operate with the public library rather than to develop an autonomous library service. Most rural communities are

unable to provide two independent library systems, one for the general public and one for the school. But even where it is feasible to establish a separate school library, except perhaps in the largest and wealthiest school administrative units, it is seldom desirable to do so. By pooling their resources with those of the community, rural schools may have access to larger and more varied book collections than they could provide for themselves. They secure the services of trained librarians who make invaluable contributions in connection not only with the selection and purchase of books but with their circulation. They profit from the fact that the book collection is kept in active use. In a joint school and public library system old titles wear out and can be replaced frequently without sacrifice of economy. Thus the library stock can be kept abreast of new developments in subject-matter fields, curriculum changes, and the emergence of improved instructional methods.

In 1928, in California, a comparison was made of school library service in two adjacent counties, one of which was affiliated with a county library, the second of which had a school district library system because there was no county library. Although approximately the same amount of money was spent by the schools in both counties, in the county with the school district system each school received only a limited amount of material. This was used for a short time, then "put to sleep" on the library shelves. In the county where co-operative arrangements were in effect the expenditures for many schools were pooled under the supervision of a trained librarian. Far more material was purchased, and it was kept in circulation and given maximum service when it was new and needed.

Co-operative arrangements between school and public library are advantageous from the point of view of the library as well as the school. The numerous rural schools which dot each county represent excellent outlets for the distribution of books. In many places the libraries of schools affiliated with public library systems are open to the public, at least at certain specified hours. In city and country alike school children use the library more frequently than their elders, and their patronage of the library is of unusual importance in rural areas where they constitute a higher proportion of the population. In many rural areas where there is now little demand

for public library service, the best hope of developing such a demand lies in establishing habits of wide reading and library use among the present generation of pupils.

Co-operation between the public library and the school has been retarded by a tendency to regard them as separate and distinct in administrative responsibility and in function. School administrators and librarians both have been slow in recognizing the essential similarity of many of the basic operations and objectives of school and library. Today it is increasingly recognized that there is little justification, particularly in rural areas, for this attitude of separatism. Although the public library and the school library are usually parts of different governmental units, as Joeckel says,

both . . . are *public* libraries, supported by the same taxpayers. They are co-ordinate parts of the public system for supplying books and library service to all people—young and old. A restricted or competitive view of their respective fields of action is bad public service.

School-library co-operation in California.—Some of the most successful co-operative arrangements between the school and the public library have been made in California. The County Free Library Act of 1911 and amendments to the school law made it permissible for school libraries to become affiliated with county libraries. Under the provisions of the legislation the trustees of a school district may decide by vote to join their county library system. They then turn over the district's library fund, which must amount to not less than twenty-five dollars per teacher, to the county library and secure library service from that agency.

As was expected, county library service is proving of particular value to rural elementary schools. While only 13 per cent of the city and high-school districts in the forty-six California counties having county libraries have contracted with them for service, 83 per cent of the elementary-school districts have made such contracts.

Besides having access to the books in its county library, each school which has contracted for service has its own library and usually receives help from the county in the selection and purchase of books. The California law provides that the library fund may be used not only for the purchase of books for school libraries but even for school apparatus. County libraries furnish schools with classroom books,

including texts and supplementary sources, reference books, maps, graphs, and charts for their permanent use.

A study made in 1934 indicated that California's school-library tie-ups are working out in a highly satisfactory way. Not counting the use pupils make of their permanent school libraries, they secure more than twelve books each in the course of a school year from the county library service available in their schools. In addition, they borrow a number of books for general reading from community branches of county libraries, which they are encouraged to visit, since these libraries will be the source of their adult reading. Ninety per cent of the school districts in California receive periodicals, phonograph records, and pictures, as well as books, from the county libraries with which they are affiliated. A smaller number receive stereographs, maps, globes, charts, slides, sheet music, lanterns, films, and other instructional material. Most county libraries maintain excellent collections of professional literature for the benefit of teachers. Each school receives far more library material "than could be purchased for an equal expenditure of money by an individual district school library."

School-library co-operation in the nation generally.—Rural schools in many states besides California have contracted for service from county libraries. Here and there, too, schools have entered into co-operative arrangements with other types of public libraries. Some have contracted for service from the public libraries of near-by cities. A school library service is now being projected in connection with some of the regional libraries in the T.V.A. area. Some rural schools in New England secure service from town libraries. The Jones Library in Amherst, Massachusetts, for example, furnishes books, magazines, and other printed materials, book lists, charts, and posters to the seven rural schools in Amherst and Pelham. Occasionally library staff members visit rural schools to lead discussions of books.

In most places there are still many shortcomings in the library service provided rural schools by public libraries. Frequently the public library's book stock is made available to schools without any effort being made to develop a specialized service designed to meet their particular requirements. There is need for closer co-operation between school and public library staffs. At least one member of the

library staff should be trained in the organization and supervision of library materials for schools, and familiar with the work of the schools in his area. The schools, too, can do a great deal to make their co-operative arrangements with public libraries more effective. While there is thus much need for improvement in school-public library tie-ups, they represent the most promising means yet developed for providing satisfactory library service in rural schools.

Educationists and librarians are agreed that for most sections of the United States, county or regional libraries, well supported and administered, provide the best means yet devised for insuring library facilities for small rural and village schools. County libraries in California, Indiana, Ohio, New Jersey, and some other states have demonstrated that such library service insures a way whereby a minimum amount of money provides a maximum of school library service.

The extension of rural school-public library co-operation should be an important objective for those working for the improvement of rural education.

School libraries in areas without public libraries.—In areas where public libraries have not yet been established, rural schools can obtain many of the advantages of affiliation with a public library by co-operating with one another for the provision of library service. A group of schools working together can build up a larger and more varied book collection than each individually could afford and can secure expert management of it through the joint employment of a trained librarian. The books available to the co-operating schools will not only be more numerous but will also be better selected and cared for, more actively used, and more frequently replaced.

In Alabama, Texas, and some other states, in the absence of public library service county superintendents of schools have organized circulating school libraries. Louis R. Wilson estimates that such libraries increase three- or fourfold the book resources available to the schools they serve, depending upon the skill with which the book stock is managed. The value of expert management is now recognized, and, as will be seen, prospective rural teachers in increasing numbers are receiving library training. The best circulating school libraries are under the supervision of trained librarians. Where supervisors, teachers, or clerks without training have been placed in charge of such libraries, they have often been given library training subsequently through summer courses or other means.

School circulating libraries usually provide books for both curriculum purposes and recreational reading; sometimes they include a collection of teachers' professional books as well. The central collection of books is usually housed in the office of the county superintendent of schools. Books are circulated by a variety of means: either the teachers pick them up when they visit the office of the superintendent or librarians or other school officials bring them to the schools on the occasion of their visits. Some counties use truck delivery; a few employ parcel post.

Thirty-four schools in Placer County, California, twenty-six of them one-teacher schools, jointly support a highly successful circulating library which concentrates on books for recreational reading. Its plan of operation is extremely simple. Monthly, in accordance with a schedule worked out in advance, each school receives a diversified collection of books for students of different ages. At the end of the month it passes on its collection to a near-by school and receives a group of fresh titles.

Co-operative arrangements of an even more informal character have been worked out in various parts of the country. Sometimes neighboring schools simply enter into an agreement to concentrate on different types of material and to effect exchanges at convenient or stated intervals.

In many parts of the country rural schools utilize so-called "traveling libraries"—collections of books, sometimes numbering one hundred or more, furnished by state libraries and state library extension agencies. Particularly where schools have neither affiliations with local public libraries nor circulating libraries of their own, such collections are often of considerable value. At best, however, traveling libraries cannot take the place of local library facilities, and if the state library agencies are weak, understaffed, or inadequately financed, they can be of only limited help. During the depression years many states could make only small book collections available; to some schools they could not extend service at all.

IMPROVING RURAL LIBRARY SERVICE

The major emphasis in the discussion thus far has been on the various means of providing library service for rural communities and schools. In view of the number of adults and children in rural areas

without any local library service, the development of satisfactory arrangements for providing service is clearly the most urgent aspect of the rural library problem. Furthermore, the quality of service a library provides is largely dependent on the strength of its basic set-up. If it is financially strong enough to build a large book collection and employ trained librarians, it may be assumed that it will offer reasonably satisfactory service.

Once good arrangements have been adopted, however, there is much which can be done both by the public library and by the school to make library service of maximum value. Public libraries with school connections have developed many devices to improve their service to pupils. Book collections in individual schools and other branches are frequently exchanged so that they will be fresh and appealing. Teacher-librarians and custodians of branch libraries are given special training and instructions to equip them to meet the needs of pupils satisfactorily. Union lists are compiled of all the titles in the library system, whether they are in the central collection, schools, or other branches. Members of the library staff sometimes visit schools to give instruction on the use of the library.

Those libraries which keep informed of the work in the schools they serve often prepare unit collections of books for special subjects and grades. To stimulate supplementary and recreational reading, they prepare graded reading lists. They endeavor to supply material for special school needs, such as remedial reading, debating, dramatics, and club programs.

A number of public libraries do a great deal to encourage pupils to continue their reading in the summer when schools are closed. They prepare programs and lists for the summer reading of pupils of various grades and sometimes promote the organization of vacation reading clubs. In some places pupils are permitted to take out a number of books for the vacation period; in others special arrangements are made so that they will have access to books while schools are closed. For example, bookmobiles or automobiles circulate special selections of children's books on regular schedule during the summer months.

What the schools are doing.—Rural schools themselves must, of course, assume considerable responsibility for fostering pupils' use of

school-library facilities. Even when affiliated with a public library, a school must interest itself in the selection of books for the school library, acquainting the proper librarian with the school's program and doing everything else necessary to get books which fit in with the curriculum and the real interests of pupils. The schools which buy their own books must select them with the greatest care. In most states book purchases made with public school funds must be approved by the state department of education. The form on which small schools in New York submit lists of prospective book purchases for state approval contains instructions and advice useful in buying books. Increasingly, rural schools are utilizing state department of education and standard library lists and obtaining the advice and guidance of library authorities in making book purchases.

A large number of rural schools now recognize the importance of making the library attractive and conducive to reading. Pupils themselves are often given responsibility for decorating the library and keeping it clean and orderly. In many schools they are also taught how to care for books. Even in small elementary schools with limited resources the library corner is often restful and inviting. The furniture is sometimes student-made. Benches are gaily painted or covered with bright material. Simple and inexpensive touches—curtains, a rag rug, pupils' art work on the walls, a plant or two—give the library a pleasant atmosphere.

Familiarity with the library not only encourages reading but, equally important, stimulates pupils to exercise initiative and independence in their study—to form the habit of investigating a subject for themselves instead of relying exclusively on teacher or textbook. Recognizing this, many rural schools are careful to arrange library material so that all but the very smallest children can readily find what they want. Instruction is given in the use of the library—wherever practicable in connection with regular school work.

A wide variety of devices are employed to encourage reading. In many schools pupils who read a minimum amount are carefully studied. In some cases it is discovered that they have not mastered the mechanics of reading, and they are given remedial work. In most cases, however, if pupils do not read enough, it is because they have not become acquainted with books which meet their real interests

and are on their level of comprehension. The problem, then, is one of guidance in book selection, the first objective being simply to meet the pupils' interests, the second, to broaden and improve them.

Story-telling, book talks, and book clubs are all utilized by rural schools to stimulate pupils' reading. Pupils are given abundant opportunity to report on books which have interested them. At the high-school level students from a group of schools sometimes meet for book discussions.

If the library is to play the important part it should in the rural school program, it should be in charge of a trained and competent person and all teachers should have some knowledge of library work. While a full-time professionally trained librarian is beyond the means of all but the largest rural schools, many schools can afford to release one teacher from some class work so that she can take charge of the library. It is increasingly recognized that such teacher-librarians must be well prepared for their responsibilities. In New York State part-time librarians must now have four years of preparation beyond the secondary level, with one of the years devoted to library science. Wisconsin requires all prospective rural teachers to take at least one course in library techniques, and in teacher-education institutions the nation over growing attention is being paid to library training.

Library service to adults.—Because in so many cases they are newly established and poorly financed, public libraries in rural areas have not done nearly enough to stimulate the use of books among adults. A study of the Rosenwald demonstration libraries in the South showed that in most places there was no active co-operation between the library and such agencies as "the farm and home demonstration service, the public health department, organizations of professional workers, . . . federal classes for adults [and] recreational agencies," despite the need of these groups for printed materials. Rural libraries are continually attempting to improve their service to both individuals and groups, however. Here and there one finds outstanding examples of good practice.

The demonstration libraries studied were found to be giving adequate service to book clubs, garden clubs, and organizations engaged in the study of literary, historical, and artistic subjects. Rural libraries closely co-operate with such clubs in many parts of the coun-

try and in some instances take the initiative in organizing them. The Jackson County, Michigan, library sponsors fourteen book clubs, ten of which are conducted in connection with the W.P.A. adult-education program. Some of the regional libraries in the T.V.A. area and a few libraries in other parts of the country have attempted to co-operate with all the important adult-education activities of the communities they serve.

Rural libraries render service of the utmost importance to individuals as well as to organized groups. Many men and women in rural areas are interested in systematic reading to remedy gaps in their education, in gaining information about some hobby or absorbing interest of the minute, or in enriching their lives with the wealth of thoughts and experiences embodied in great books. Rural libraries bring them the books to satisfy these desires, and alert librarians contribute valuable guidance by preparing lists of books on various subjects and by making individual recommendations. Many rural people regard their contact with a librarian interested in their problems as the most beneficial aspect of library service.

The bookmobile, which is now in wide use, enables the rural library to extend its service to a far greater number of individual readers. It is ideally adapted to areas where the concentration of population is too low to justify either the establishment of a stable book stock or even the maintenance of a temporary deposit station. The bookmobile brings the people in such sparsely settled areas the books they want and in many cases the services of a librarian, for a trained person often either drives the bookmobile or accompanies the driver. Many rural people await the bookmobile to ask the librarian what to read in connection with some particular interest. In addition to bringing books direct to readers who do not have access to a stationary collection, the bookmobile permits frequent exchange of collections in small deposit stations and school libraries, thus adding to their variety and appeal.

The services of state library agencies.—Some state library agencies offer a variety of services to adult readers. In areas which have no local library such services are, of course, of particular value. Where there are local libraries, the services of good state agencies strengthen and supplement their own.

Like local libraries, state library agencies offer service to both in-

dividuals and groups. Rural discussion clubs, organized to consider agricultural, political, or social problems, often obtain both bibliographies and books from state library agencies. The Library Division of the Minnesota State Department of Education lends carefully chosen books to rural discussion groups in twenty counties. In Illinois groups organized to study family life and the training of children borrowed 1,300 books from the Illinois Library Extension Division in a recent year.

In Nebraska, the Dakotas, Kentucky, New Hampshire, and some other states, state-wide reading projects have been organized co-operatively by state home-demonstration agents and the state library agencies. Book lists on such subjects as home improvement and travel are prepared by the state libraries and made available through the local home-demonstration clubs. Each club builds its year's program around a particular subject and a particular book list, the individual members selecting for reading whatever titles interest them most. Books are borrowed from local libraries, where they exist, or direct from the state agencies.

Many state libraries offer a great deal of direct service to individual readers. The New York State Library annually distributes more than 65,000 books direct to individuals. During a recent two-year period the Oregon State Library loaned more than 450,000 volumes. Oregon provides "guided reading service" to anyone requesting it. A reading course is prepared on any subject in which an applicant expresses interest. Books are chosen on the level of his reading ability, and four are mailed out at once with a personal letter describing them. The books needed to complete the course are reserved and sent out automatically, usually at four-week intervals.

The need for research and further improvement.—As this chapter has indicated, considerable progress has been made in recent years in extending library service to rural communities and schools. This progress, however, should not be permitted to obscure the present deficiencies in rural library service or the difficulties in the way of effecting significant improvement. It is true that many desirable types of regional public libraries have been developed. Legislation permitting the organization of library units on a county or regional basis has now been enacted in most states. Considering the nation as

a whole, however, it has not been implemented by the actual establishment of such units except in relatively few places. The great majority of rural people are still without permanent local library facilities.

There are, furthermore, serious obstacles to the rapid extension of library service in rural areas. Library service remains a permissive function of government. Rural communities do not have to establish libraries, and they are seldom encouraged to do so by significant financial aid from the state. The extension of rural library service, therefore, depends in large part upon a growth in demand for such service. Rural people must want library service enough to be willing to support it.

Even when they are willing, however, they will often not be able to bear the full cost of establishing libraries and providing adequate service. State and federal financial assistance for the extension and improvement of rural library service is urgently needed.

Further experimentation and research should be devoted to determining the best types of arrangements for bringing library service to rural communities and schools. In view of the wide variations which exist in regional resources, geographic conditions, and school and library facilities, many sound patterns of rural library organization must be evolved. Research studies are needed to evaluate different types of arrangements and to analyze the reasons for their success or failure. There is general agreement, for example, that the only feasible unit for providing rural library service is a fairly large geographic area, but little is known about the exact conditions which should be met for greatest efficiency and economy. Some agreements for providing library service to large areas have subsequently been abrogated. Was their failure due to some inherent flaw or to some peculiarly local consideration? Careful studies of both successful and unsuccessful rural library arrangements are greatly needed.

Much also remains to be done in improving rural library service where it is available. In many places the mere provision of service has seemed to exhaust an area's resources and energies, and little attention has been paid to the quality of the service. Almost every aspect of rural library service can be significantly improved. In many places local units are reaching too few people in their service

area. Even where it exists, co-operation between public libraries and schools usually leaves much to be desired. Most local libraries could integrate their services much more closely with those of state library agencies. They could enormously improve their services to organized groups. It has been suggested that each rural library should appoint a member of its staff to "cooperate with groups engaged in formal and informal adult educational activities and to maintain relationships with all organizations through which the library may increase its usefulness to the community."

Much more attention needs to be paid to the kind of books available in rural libraries and to the use to which they are put, and here again research studies will be of value. Do existing book collections meet the needs of rural readers? What kind of books actually circulate, and what kinds of people borrow them? How alert is the personnel of rural libraries to the problems of rural life? It is fair to assume that making more books available will lead to increased reading and a happier and better-educated citizenry. But many more concrete facts are needed to show just what library service does and what it can contribute both to rural group activities and to the enrichment of individual lives. Such facts may be expected to stimulate not only the improvement but also the extension of rural library service.

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CHAPTER IX

THE SCHOOLS AND RURAL HEALTH

FOR a number of reasons rural schools must concern themselves with the entire problem of rural health. Pupils' notions about health and their physical and mental well-being are obviously dependent on home and community conditions and experiences, not merely on what they learn and do in school. In providing health service, as in providing library service, considerations of economy compel rural schools to utilize existing community facilities to the greatest extent possible; they must plan their own programs to dovetail with those of other agencies. Finally, rural schools have a responsibility not only to their pupils but to the general public to do everything in their power, not inconsistent with their educational function, to improve community conditions. Rural health is one of the most important and appropriate areas for the schools' attention; they cannot neglect it without to some extent evading their responsibility to their pupils and devitalizing their program. Fortunately, too, the schools are in a strategic position to contribute to the improvement of rural health.

THE FACTS ABOUT RURAL HEALTH

The difficulties rural people face in providing adequate health service are the same ones which handicap them in providing schools and libraries: their limited financial resources, the heavy economic burden of the productive-age group, and the high cost of bringing service to a widely scattered population. In each case, too, they have tried to overcome their difficulties in the same way—by pooling the resources of a large area to construct an administrative unit capable of serving them more efficiently and economically. The most common and, in general, the most efficient means of bringing health service to rural people is the public health unit which serves a county or a district of two or more counties. But as of June 30, 1939, despite some assistance from the states, the federal government, and founda-

tions, less than 40 per cent of the 2,453 predominantly rural counties in America had full-time health units. Many of these units, furthermore, were inadequately staffed and financed to reach all the people in their service areas and give them proper care. Although standards of public health nursing care call for one nurse for every 1,500-2,000 people, in rural areas, considering the nation as a whole, only one nurse was available for each 10,000 people. On January 1, 1939, 780 counties had no public health nurse, and in some places a single nurse was supposed to serve more than 30,000 people.

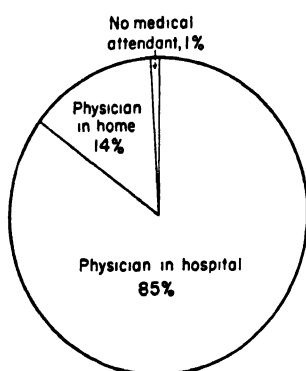
Hospital facilities in rural areas are in general equally deficient. More than 1,300 counties, with a total of seventeen million inhabitants, have no registered general hospital. These are sparsely settled, poor counties with small percentages of urban population. Only 423 counties in the United States, nearly all of them predominantly urban, maintain publicly supported hospitals. In some areas persons who are unable to pay for hospital care are also received in private hospitals, either through provision by some governmental body or through private charity; but it is obvious that hospital care is either inaccessible to or beyond the means of many rural people. It has been authoritatively said that in rural areas admission of persons in the low-income groups to hospital bed-care usually signifies an acute emergency requiring surgical attention. Outpatient (clinics serving persons unable to pay for medical care exist in only a handful of places in the country.

The shortage of physicians.—The inadequacy of rural hospital facilities, the relatively unattractive economic prospects in the country, the necessity of traveling great distances, and the limited opportunities for postgraduate study all combine to make rural practice unappealing to many young doctors. The consequence is that there are not only too few physicians in rural areas but that in all probability their number—at least in relation to the population to be served—is declining. A survey of four selected states—New York, Iowa, South Carolina, and Washington—showed a sharp decrease between 1920 and 1930 in the ratio of rural physicians to rural population. One foundation is doing what it can to combat this trend by offering financial assistance to promising medical students who desire to enter rural practice. The Georgia legislature recently authorized scholar-

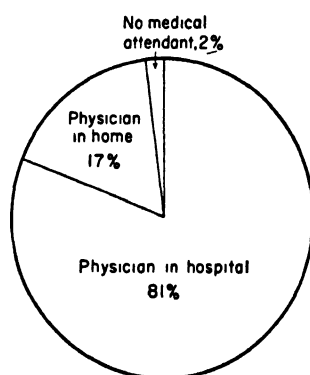
ships for Georgia medical students who commit themselves to practice in the rural parts of the state for at least four years.

There is a marked shortage of obstetricians and pediatricians in rural areas, which is particularly unfortunate in view of the fact that

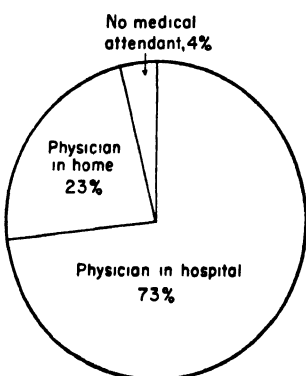
Cities of 100,000 or more



Cities of 50,000 to 100,000



Cities of 10,000 to 50,000



Rural areas

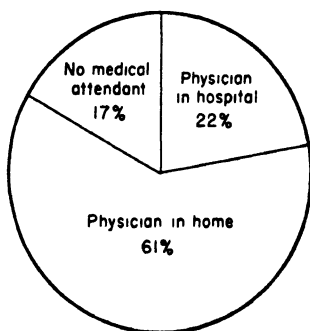


FIG. 6.—Attendant at birth in live births in cities of specified size and in rural areas of the United States, 1939. Data are from the U.S. Bureau of the Census (U.S. Department of Labor, Children's Bureau, Chart B39-5)

more than half of the births in the United States take place there. As Figure 6 shows, in 1939 there was no physician in attendance at 17 per cent of the births in rural areas. Only 22 per cent of rural births took place in hospitals; the corresponding figure for cities was

81 per cent. Deliveries in rural areas are generally the province of the general practitioner and not the specialist. Only 1.9 per cent of the obstetricians certified by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology serve communities of less than ten thousand population; only 2.7 per cent of the pediatricians certified by the American Board of Pediatrics are in small centers of population. Many general practitioners have not had adequate theoretical or clinical training for the more difficult problems they encounter in maternity and child care. The situation is being remedied to some extent by the use of Social Security funds for the organization of "short courses in obstetrics and pediatrics for physicians living at some distance from medical centers." However, it is clear that women in rural areas do not ordinarily have the same caliber of care available in childbirth as urban women. Adequate, well-organized programs providing for complete maternity nursing care, including delivery care, are still comparatively rare in rural America.

Some results of inadequate health facilities.—On the whole, life in the country is conducive to health, and in general the health of rural people compares favorably with that of city dwellers. Nevertheless, deficiencies in rural health facilities are reflected in many ways in rural health conditions. The incidence of certain diseases is markedly higher in the country, and rural areas have lagged behind cities in reaping the benefit of new medical discoveries and practices. In 1929 cities first achieved a lower infant mortality rate than rural areas and, despite some decline in the rural rate considered absolutely, have since tended to increase their advantage (see Fig. 7). In the all-important index of life-expectancy at birth, between 1900 and 1930 there was a 60 per cent greater increase in the city than in the country.

Rural areas have much higher death rates than cities from certain communicable diseases characteristically associated with childhood and youth, nutritional deficiencies, and inadequate safeguarding of food and water supplies. In 1938, although only 36.5 per cent of the nation's deaths occurred in rural areas, 74 per cent of the deaths from malaria occurred there. Rural areas also suffered a disproportionate number of deaths from pellagra, dysentery, typhoid, whooping cough, measles, and influenza.

Many of these illnesses—typhoid, pellagra, and malaria, for example—influence morbidity statistics even more markedly than they do mortality rates. For each death recorded as being due to malaria two thousand to four thousand days of sickness are experienced by persons suffering from the disease. The diseases which affect rural people have another result which does not register itself statistically but leaves its mark upon every aspect of rural life: they are debilitating and devitalizing, killing initiative and reducing efficiency in

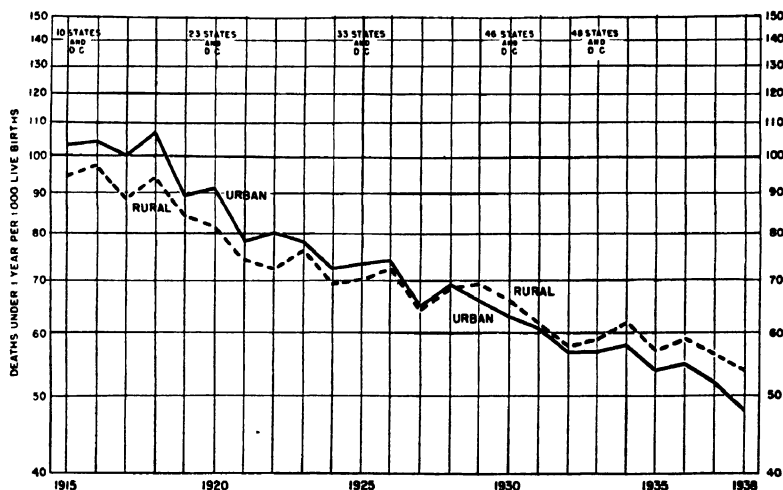


FIG. 7.—Infant mortality in urban and rural areas, 1915–38, of the United States Expanding Birth-Registration Area. Data are from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. (U.S. Department of Labor, Children's Bureau, chart.)

school, in work, in government. Much of the “shiftlessness” which is so unjustifiably attributed to rural people can be directly traced to chronic illness and to the conditions under which rural people live.

Difficulties and diseases among rural children.—Poor health conditions and facilities inevitably affect rural children, too. Studies made in various parts of the country show that they suffer more from certain diseases than urban children and are more commonly afflicted with difficulties that are specifically remediable. In the South, particularly in underprivileged areas, the incidence of malaria, hookworm, and pellagra among children is distressingly high. In one county in southern Georgia surveyed in 1936, 60 per cent of the school children were found to be affected with hookworm; in one

school 83 per cent of the children had the disease. In this same county 86 per cent of the children had defective teeth. A similar study in Pickens County, South Carolina, revealed that more than 90 per cent of all school children suffered from one or more major difficulties. Some advanced cases of pellagra were observed, and malnutrition was general. Throat and glandular troubles were also widespread.

It must not be thought that such conditions exist only in the South. Surveys made in Washington, Colorado, and Wisconsin suggest that the health needs of rural children the nation over are receiving inadequate attention. Diseases which society knows how to control are permitted to ravage them. Difficulties which could be readily detected by a system of preschool and school examinations and in many instances remedied are in large numbers of cases permitted to remain uncorrected. An abundance of evidence suggests that a disproportionately high percentage of rural children suffer from eye and ear troubles, spinal curvature, defects in breathing, glandular disturbances, diseased tonsils and adenoids, conditions associated with malnutrition, and defective teeth. Yet probably every American agrees in his heart that

adequate provision to assure satisfactory growth and development and protection of the health of children is a public responsibility warranting special consideration and emphasis in any program directed toward better health of the people as a whole. Upon what is done to assure physical and mental health during maternity, infancy, childhood, and youth depends the vigor and health of the adult population.

HEALTH AGENCIES IN RURAL AREAS

Many agencies are functioning in rural areas with which the schools can co-operate in their efforts to improve rural health. Unfortunately, these agencies are neither widespread enough nor, in most instances, adequately staffed and financed to reach everyone and offer a high quality of service. But the very difficulties rural people face in providing good health service make it imperative that the schools co-operate closely with whatever health agencies do exist in the community, so that there will be no waste motion or duplication of effort.

As has been said, the public health unit, although still lacking in many areas, is by far the most widespread and influential agency for safeguarding rural health. In June, 1939, there were such units in nearly a thousand rural counties, and others have since been established. Public health units differ widely in staff, organization, and services offered. In general, the best ones have the following minimum personnel: (1) a full-time county health officer with a medical degree and specialized public health training; (2) a sanitary officer; (3) a laboratory technician (who in some instances may give clerical assistance in the compilation of records and vital statistics); and (4) public health nurses in a ratio to population not greatly below the one to 2,000 standard.

In addition to the countless important contributions the public health agency makes to general community well-being, its activities benefit children and tie up with the schools' health program in many ways. It is desirable, for example, to co-ordinate the agency's pre-school health program with the school program so that children will have the benefit of continuous health supervision and so that parents, teachers, and others concerned may have a complete picture of each child's health status and physical development.

The co-operation and advice of the public health agency is of value in connection with practically every phase of the schools' health program. The help of health officers and their staffs is often enlisted in planning the instructional program in health, in examining children, and in making special plans for handicapped children. Sanitary officers are called in to inspect the school's water supply and washing and waste disposal facilities. Co-operation between school and public health unit is obviously essential in handling the immunization, quarantine, and segregation problems which arise in connection with contagious diseases.

The Kellogg Foundation's health program.—In its ambitious program to stimulate local efforts to improve child health in seven Michigan counties, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation has operated very largely through the county public health agencies. The Foundation has contributed to the support of the agencies so that they could augment their staffs and carry out their regular health duties more satisfactorily. Besides the director, the staff of each of the seven

health departments now consists of one or more health engineers, clerks, and a family health counselor for every five thousand people. "The . . . counselor is both a trained nurse and teacher. She works in homes, in schools, with physicians and dentists, and with community groups." The health engineer calls on such people as dairymen, farmers, and restaurant operators. Major emphasis of the program is on the customary aspects of public health work—communicable disease control, child hygiene, maternity care, general sanitation, and food sanitation.

Through supplementary programs the Foundation arranges for, and contributes to the cost of, examinations of infants and preschool and entering-school children in doctors' offices. It fosters immunization programs against smallpox and diphtheria. It pays part of the cost of necessary remedial services and the entire cost when parents are unable to meet it. It finances postgraduate study for physicians, teachers, and many other individuals who have close and influential contact with children. It encourages the organization of local planning groups, composed largely of lay people, which are expected to assume a constantly increasing amount of responsibility in connection with the health program and other civic problems of their respective communities. These supplementary aspects of the Kellogg Foundation's work are highly important, but the extent to which its health program functions through the county health departments illustrates the great potential value of the public health agency.

Maternal and child health services.—In many rural areas maternal and child health services are being augmented and improved with funds made available through the Social Security Act. Physicians and public health nurses, many of whom have had special training for maternal and child health work, have been added to the staff of all state and many local public health agencies. Nurses make home visits for inspection in maternal and child care, instruct groups of mothers and high-school girls, and assist at prenatal clinics and child health conferences. In 1939 some form of maternal and child health service was provided in 1,671 of the 2,453 rural counties.

The most widely available type of service was that provided by public health nurses, over 2,700 nurses having been added to the staffs of state and local public health units with Social Security funds.

As has been said, public health nursing service was by no means universally available, and there were few counties where there were enough nurses to meet well-established standards of nursing care. Well-organized home delivery service was available in only 102 counties. However, over 1,200 permanent centers have been established where mothers who cannot pay for medical care can receive prenatal and postpartum medical supervision. Centers where conferences are held at regular intervals on child health supervision are even more numerous. In one place in each state complete maternal and child health services are provided on a demonstration basis to show people in and out of the area the feasibility and value of a well-rounded program.

In 1939 educational dental service was available in 27 per cent of all rural counties and corrective service in 19 per cent. In a smaller number of counties nutritional service was provided. While completely satisfactory maternal and child health services are still the exception and not the rule in rural America, it is clear that great strides have been and are being made.

Under the Social Security program some medical services are also provided in the schools of 38 per cent of all rural counties and some nursing supervision in the schools of 57 per cent of all rural counties. In nine states specialists have been assigned to schools and teacher preparatory institutions to assist in the development of courses in health and the teaching of health.

Other rural health agencies.—There are many other programs for the improvement of rural health and other agencies in the field besides the public health unit. Many of these agencies are limited by their objectives or resources to some one or two functions relating to health. Nevertheless, they all have something to contribute, and the rural school should familiarize itself with every agency and program operating in its area.

In 1937 North Carolina pioneered in sponsoring a birth-control program which has as one of its important objectives the improvement of maternal and child health, and two or three states have since launched similar programs. In connection with their public health units three-fifths of North Carolina's counties now have birth-control clinics where married women who cannot afford to pay

for medical care may secure information about contraception. In city or country a high infant and maternal mortality rate is the almost inevitable accompaniment of a high birth rate among families in low-income groups. Many of the gravest social problems rural people face arise from the disproportion between their economic resources and the number of children they have to support. In certain areas, under existing conditions an increase in the population would jeopardize the already low standard of living. Thus rural people have special reason for welcoming well-administered programs for making reliable birth-control information more widely available.

In hundreds of rural counties co-operative health programs have been established in recent years, in many instances under the sponsorship of the Farm Security Administration and local medical associations. Such co-operatives operate on the insurance principle, spreading costs among many people and over long periods of time so that impossibly heavy burdens do not fall on individual families when they are least able to afford it. Group health programs have brought better medical care within the reach of thousands of farm families of limited and moderate means and at the same time have actually increased the income of many rural doctors and hospitals. In a few rural areas similar programs providing for hospitalization are now beginning to appear. For communities not yet ready for complete group health programs, co-operative diagnostic centers have been suggested. The influence of co-operative health programs promises to spread rapidly and widely in rural America. Particularly since their operation involves many of the principles schools emphasize—community responsibility, the value of co-operation, the importance of the preventive aspects of medical care—schools have an obligation to familiarize themselves with their work.

A number of other agencies have health programs of immediate interest to the schools. In many rural areas the W.P.A. gives courses in health and sponsors physical examinations as a part of its adult-education program. Schools can often tie up their own program with the work being done in the adult health classes. Where W.P.A.-sponsored physical examinations are given on a wide scale, as in North Carolina, they provide statistical information of value in any investigation of community health needs. As has been mentioned

in earlier chapters, it is also desirable for the schools to secure the co-operation of the W.P.A. and N.Y.A. in connection with their hot-lunch programs and the improvement of their buildings and grounds.

Many of the health activities of the American Red Cross are of great benefit to rural schools. Instruction in first aid by the Red Cross is of particular value in rural areas where a doctor is often hours, not minutes, away. Diet and garden projects of the Red Cross in areas where pellagra is common offer many possibilities for educational tie-ups. In some rural areas demonstration programs sponsored by the Red Cross have led to the establishment of permanent school health programs.

It is almost impossible to compile an exhaustive list of agencies interested in rural health problems. In one part of the country or another, rural health projects have been undertaken by parent-teacher associations, charities, hospitals, near-by medical schools, county and home demonstration agents, service clubs, and children's and youth's organizations. Even where such agencies have not devoted their attention to rural health, they can often be stimulated to take an interest in health work by some other responsible community agency, such as the school. Local medical and dental associations can nearly always be counted upon to lend their support to well-conceived plans and campaigns for improving community health. While there are relatively few rural areas which have adequate and well-rounded health programs, rural schools can nearly everywhere find some community assistance for their own health activities if they energetically search for it.

THE HEALTH PROGRAM OF THE SCHOOLS

It is clear that many agencies besides the school have responsibilities in connection with rural health. A large share of responsibility necessarily falls upon the family and the community. The family has primary responsibility for safeguarding the mental and physical well-being of its members, for providing a healthful home environment, and for training children in sound health concepts and practices. To the extent that its financial resources are inadequate for the fulfilment of these obligations, and to the extent that they

depend upon group rather than individual action, the community must assume responsibility. Of the many community agencies charged with the task of safeguarding health, the most important is the public health unit.

The schools, too, however, have considerable responsibility in connection with health, and, particularly in rural areas, the line between their responsibilities, the family's, and the community's cannot be drawn hard and fast. Even educators with a restricted concept of the function of the school recognize that the school should interest itself in the health of its pupils, if only because there is a close and demonstrable relationship between health and scholarship: a well-developed child health program in Mesa, Colorado, resulted promptly in a 10 per cent improvement in pupils' school work. The school, it is generally agreed, has an obligation to teach its pupils the fundamentals of healthful living and to safeguard their health during the many hours daily which they spend in school.

At least in rural areas the fulfilment of its responsibility to its pupils makes it necessary for the school to interest itself to some extent in community conditions affecting health.

The relation between teaching and the practices of the community is immediately apparent, for health cannot be treated as an individual matter. Hookworms can be avoided only by general sanitary facilities. Typhoid is spread by impure water or bad food, no matter how careful each individual tries to be. Malaria flies on the wings of mosquitoes from house to house unless swamps are drained or screens carefully used. Tuberculosis, diphtheria, measles, spread from person to person. Public action and community cooperation are necessary if a village or countryside is to keep well.

There are still other ways in which the rural school's responsibility to its pupils leads to an interest in community health conditions and facilities. In diagnosing pupils' health status and in getting remedial work done, the school must enlist the support of parents and community health agencies. In formulating its program of health education, it must take account of the concepts and health habits which pupils have acquired as a result of their preschool and out-of-school training. Finally, it may be urged that if the modern rural school is to be faithful to its objective of educating pupils for life—for their future responsibilities as citizens, workers, and parents—it cannot

itself disregard community conditions which palpably and urgently demand improvement. The school can neglect a problem as important as community health only at the risk of devitalizing its whole program and jeopardizing its educational effectiveness.

Some things the schools can do.—Fortunately, rural schools are in a strategic position to contribute to the improvement of health conditions. Well-taught pupils can do a great deal toward enlightening parents about health and breaking down prejudices and superstitions. In many instances the experience pupils have obtained at school in planning nutritious and well-balanced noon meals has led to significant improvements in their families' diet. In addition, rural schools can attempt to reach adults directly with health instruction. In Virginia every classroom teacher maintains a file of health literature for circulation to parents. Many study groups have been organized which pay particular attention to problems of health and child development. In other states health education is often carried on through parent-teacher groups.

In some places rural schools have waged strong campaigns to make the adult population aware of conditions which adversely affect community health and of inadequacies in health facilities. Here and there they have taken the initiative in organizing programs to improve conditions. To some extent, of course, the deficiencies in rural health conditions and facilities are economic in origin and largely beyond the power of the school to correct. But to a surprising extent they result from a widespread lack of understanding of the importance of well-balanced diets, improved sanitation, and family and community health safeguards of various kinds. Education is as important as economic amelioration in the improvement of rural health.

Dramatic proof of these assertions is furnished by the actual results of school-initiated health programs in a number of places. In the county where 60 per cent of the children were found to be suffering from hookworm—Bulloch County, Georgia—the incidence of the disease among pupils was reduced by more than half, to 27.7 per cent, in a three-and-one-half-year period as a result of a program launched under school leadership. The teachers themselves studied the disease; then, using literature and films supplied by the state health department, stimulated the pupils' interest in the prob-

lem the community faced in overcoming hookworm infestation. The pupils in turn relayed the information they had acquired about hookworm to their families. Plans were developed for treating infected children and adults and for preventing further soil pollution. The state health department, local physicians, the parents of school children, and other adults co-operated in the program for treating pupils suffering from hookworm. In connection with the program to prevent soil pollution, pupils studied the type of sanitary provisions which were necessary to prevent the spread of hookworm and surveyed existing facilities. With the help of parent-teacher association members they worked to arouse the community to the need of effecting improvements. A school-sponsored W.P.A. project was launched under which 3,500 sanitary pit privies were constructed in a three-and-a-half-year period. The people of the community supplied the lumber; the health department provided plans and selected sites; the W.P.A. furnished workers; and the board of education arranged for their transportation.

The sharp reduction in the incidence of hookworm is only one of the notable accomplishments of Bulloch County's school-initiated health program. Water supply and waste disposal facilities in the schools and in the community have been improved. Immunizations against smallpox, typhoid, and diphtheria have become an established part of the school program. In part as a result of the interest in health stirred up by the schools a public health department has been established in Bulloch County.

Components of the school health program.—What should be the component phases of a well-rounded school health program? *Education in the Forty-eight States* names six of undeniable importance:

1. A healthful school environment in a safe, sanitary school building, with adequate indoor and outdoor play space
2. Mental hygiene as reflected in properly qualified teachers and co-operative pupil-teacher relationships
3. Health protection through medical inspection, school nursing service, and remedial work
4. Health instruction by means of curriculum material related to the child and his environment.
5. Physical education properly graded to pupil capacities and interests
6. Recreation on a year-round, community basis

Inevitably these phases overlap to some extent. The physical environment has its effect on the mental life of the pupil. Health protection work also offers many opportunities for health instruction. However, the above scheme provides a convenient framework for discussing the activities of the modern rural school relating to health. Recreation is reserved for discussion in chapter x.

1. *The school environment*.—The rural school is severely handicapped in providing an environment which safeguards and contributes to the child's physical and mental well-being. Most rural schools, it must be remembered, are still one- or two-room affairs. The great majority have neither access to central station electric power nor facilities of their own for generating current. A large number lack running water and inside toilets. As was brought out in chapter ii, the per-pupil investment in plant and equipment in rural schools is less than half what it is in urban schools, and this low investment reflects itself in deficiencies in heating, lighting, ventilation, and sanitation.

In some cases significant improvement unquestionably depends upon rebuilding, and rebuilding in turn may well await reorganization and the development of a financially strong school administrative unit. The modernization programs which have been successfully completed by many relatively poor rural schools prove, however, that an attitude of fatalism is unwarranted. Studies of the school plant should be undertaken periodically, and they should consider feasible immediate improvements as well as long-term objectives.

The aid of the public health agency, in particular of the sanitary officer, may be enlisted in the inspection and improvement of drinking and waste disposal facilities. In the absence of a public health unit the help of local doctors and the county medical association should be solicited. Where drinking and sanitary facilities are lacking or inadequate, or where there are conditions which demand correction, the examining doctors will often help arouse public opinion to the need for improvement. Many surveys have shown that such a need exists in a great many rural schools. A surprising number of schools have no drinking water or toilet facilities. The wells of numerous other schools have been found to have loose casings or to be

entirely without earth protection against pollution. The prevalence of such conditions in the area in which the Kellogg Foundation's health program operates caused great stress to be placed by that organization upon relocation of wells.

Even where a safe water supply and sanitary toilet facilities exist, periodic rechecks and frequent inspections are essential. Pupils can often be given a great deal of responsibility not only for keeping drinking and toilet facilities clean but also for making improvements in the school environment. Many rural schools have developed valuable projects centering around school improvement. A typical procedure is for the teacher to focus pupils' attention on deficiencies in the school environment and encourage them to draw up plans for making it more healthful, attractive, and comfortable. In a one-room school near Clarence, New York, pupils transformed one of two cluttered-up closets, which had been used only for dead storage, into a kitchen so attractive that it also proved useful as a conference room. The second closet when cleaned up provided ample space for a cloakroom and for drinking and hand-washing facilities. In other rural schools pupils have constructed such things as board draft deflectors, shades, and curtains, which are important in safeguarding sight as well as improving the appearance of the room. Such activities have a double value: they give pupils an increased awareness of the effects of their physical environment and they show them how, through the exercise of initiative, they can improve it.

2. *Mental hygiene.*—In rural, as in urban, areas, increasing stress is being placed on the health of school personnel, which, like the physical environment, may have important repercussions on the well-being of pupils. Many states now require prospective teachers to take health examinations before certifying them, and there is growing recognition of the need for periodic physical examinations of teachers and other school employees.

Increasing attention is also being paid to teachers' personalities and emotional balance. It is recognized that "to protect the child against harmful emotional and psychological disturbances in the classroom is no less important than to protect him against bad physical conditions. The former are more subtle and often more dangerous than the latter." In rural areas in particular it is important that teachers be equipped by personality and knowledge to

safeguard pupils' mental health. In most rural communities there are no guidance specialists, psychologists, psychiatrists, psychiatric social workers, or child guidance clinics either to help children or to advise teachers how to deal with them. The teachers themselves must be aware of the importance of making children feel comfortable and secure and they must know how to accomplish these objectives. They must be able to make school work a challenging and exciting experience, not a dull, frightening, competitive chore. They must know the value, and be temperamentally capable, of taking an interest in children, of being friendly and encouraging, of taking account of physical defects and special problems which handicap certain pupils, and of adjusting the curriculum to individual interests and aptitudes. Teachers who are well adjusted and well trained not only can prevent children from being overwhelmed by feelings of inadequacy and failure but can make valuable positive contributions to their development.

While sensitive, well-prepared teachers can deal with psychological problems of the average pupil, disturbed and maladjusted children require expert care. Because such care is not locally available in many communities, in New York and Texas state departments operate traveling clinics conducted by competent psychiatrists. In other states rural schools have made tie-ups with mental hygiene agencies and child guidance centers in near-by cities and at teacher-education institutions. The schools give the examining agency as much information as possible about each child who is referred for help, including the facts about his home environment and the difficulties he faces in adjusting himself. In addition to its own diagnostic and therapeutic work the examining agency often makes to the school invaluable recommendations for the treatment of the child.

3. *Health protection.*—Health protection, more than any other phase of a school's health program, calls for co-operation with other community agencies. A satisfactory program involves immunization, physical examinations and inspections, and necessary remedial work. Obviously, such activities cannot be undertaken by the rural school without the co-operation of community health agencies and the understanding and support of parents.

The agencies whose co-operation the school must secure will vary

from community to community. In most places the public health agency will be in a position to give the greatest amount of help. However, child health work in Mesa County, Colorado, depends to a large extent on health clinics sponsored by the parent-teacher associations. Diphtheria immunization and smallpox vaccination of children in and near Elk City, Oklahoma, are handled by the co-operative hospital in that city. In some counties which have no local public health unit immunization, vaccination and even treatment programs are undertaken at the schools with the help of local physicians; necessary material is sometimes furnished by state health departments. Small fees are charged in some instances, but the county generally pays the fee if the pupil cannot. In connection with dental examinations rural schools now receive a great deal of help from traveling dental clinics.

It is nearly always necessary for rural schools to secure outside help in order to give medical and dental examinations. Even with such help school examinations have often been too perfunctory to be of real value. An increasing number of schools are substituting thorough examinations at two- or three-year intervals for the superficial annual examinations previously given. In recent years the particular importance of examining entering pupils has come to be widely recognized. Summer roundups of preschool children have become common practice in many rural communities. Often these roundups are sponsored by parent-teachers associations, whose national organization emphasizes their importance. In some places P.-T.A. members undertake to communicate individually with the parents of all entering school children.

Daily health inspections are of unusual importance in rural schools, for if the spread of contagious diseases is prevented at school, it is often prevented in the entire community. Since most rural schools have neither doctors nor nurses in regular attendance, it is essential that teachers familiarize themselves with the symptoms of the common diseases of children.

Health inspections and examinations are of little value if they do not eventuate in appropriate remedial action. Many rural schools have developed systematic plans for notifying parents of the defects and diseases revealed by examinations and for following up each

situation until proper remedial action has been taken. The most general practice is to send notification cards to parents whose children need medical attention, but in many cases school nurses, guidance counselors, or teachers communicate personally with parents.

Where parents cannot afford the remedial work their children need, it is the school's responsibility to bring them into contact with



Farm Security Administration Photographer Marion Post

NURSE AND DOCTOR EXAMINE A PUPIL IN A MODERN
RURAL SCHOOL (COFFEE CO, ALA)

the community agency which is in a position to help them. Local medical or dental associations sometimes sponsor arrangements whereby children may receive necessary treatment at very low rates. Parent-teacher associations or welfare organizations then pay the small fees which are charged, which often merely cover the expenses which are incurred in connection with treatment. An ingenious scheme has been worked out by the health co-operative at Tygart Valley Homesteads, West Virginia, whereby the need for community assistance is largely eliminated so far as dental care is concerned.

Parents pay small monthly fees which entitle their children to complete dental service.

In the rural school health protection often requires prompt action on the part of the teacher, for there may not be a nurse or doctor within ready call. It is absolutely essential, therefore, that rural teachers have a knowledge of first aid. Louisiana now requires all teachers and prospective teachers to take at least one semester-hour's work in first aid.

4. *Health education.*—As was mentioned in chapter iv, health and safety are being increasingly emphasized in rural schools. In some states courses in these subjects are mandatory. Bulking even larger than the separate courses and units, however, is the amount of instruction given in connection with other school subjects, projects, and school activities. Safety and health instruction is rapidly winning its way into the program of the modern rural school, and it is increasingly recognized that such instruction must result not only in sound concepts but in appropriate attitudes and practices.

Many rural schools are beginning to exploit the important advantages they have for giving health instruction. The surroundings suggest innumerable themes for meaningful discussions of health. The effect of environment on people's well-being, for example, need not be a bookish subject for the country child. He sees it illustrated every day in connection with his family's efforts to wrest a living from the soil and in many other aspects of rural life. Similarly, the rural child comes in close contact with the life-processes of animals and plants. Through his interest in them he can readily be brought to a realization of his own physical needs. In making pupils aware of broad community aspects of the health problem, many rural schools have made use of local happenings and activities, such as epidemics, clean-up drives, and swamp-drainage projects.

Rural school activities often furnish natural opportunities for providing health instruction and for fostering the development of good health habits. The planning of the school lunch, for example, provides an ideal occasion for teaching pupils about the importance of an adequate and well-balanced diet. The noon hour itself contains the educational possibilities. Many desirable habits—for example, hand-washing and leisurely eating—can be formed or reinforced. Pupils can readily be made to see the importance of the

lunch period being sociable and pleasant and of the room or corner in which they eat being as attractive as possible.

Similarly, rest periods, necessary for young and sickly children who must spend long hours away from home, can be employed to emphasize the need and methods of proper relaxation. Children's pride and independence may be appealed to so that they will develop good habits of personal hygiene and keep washroom and toilet facilities clean despite the difficulties which may be involved.

5. *Physical education*.—Physical education has important values for rural children, even though they ordinarily get a great deal of exercise and outdoor life. There is considerable evidence that farm work tends to develop the muscles utilized in slow, straining activities at the expense of those needed for quickness and rhythmic grace; much of the awkwardness traditionally attributed to country youth may be traceable to this fact. Many types of physical education activities counteract this influence and contribute to well-rounded physical development. The mastery of various physical skills has important psychological results as well, helping to overcome feelings of inadequacy and timidity. Finally, because rural children are relatively isolated, games, group activities, and team sports are perhaps of particular value to them.

Despite these facts, physical education has been neglected in the rural school program. Many rural elementary schools, it must be remembered, have only the most meager school or playground facilities for physical education. Even rural high schools often lack gymnasium and playground facilities. A study made in 1934 showed that only 45 per cent of a representative group of rural high schools offered physical education.

Many rural schools have failed to recognize the potential value of physical education. Even where offered, it has often been regarded as a "filler," with children of all ages grouped together simply because they happened to have a vacant class period at the same time. Overemphasis on interscholastic activities has also blocked the development of well-rounded physical education programs. In some schools gymnasiums and playgrounds have been regarded as the possession of the school teams rather than of the entire student body.

Today it is increasingly recognized that a well-planned physical

education program offers benefits to all pupils. Adequate provision for gymnasiums and playground space is being made in the plans of new rural schools, and many existing schools, through better planning and relatively inexpensive improvements, have provided facilities for expanded physical education programs. Pupils are being grouped together in accordance with their age, interests, and abilities, so that they will get the fullest benefit from their physical education work.

Tennessee's blue-ribbon health program.—Relatively few rural schools now have adequate and well-rounded programs to safeguard the health of pupils, despite the importance of that objective. While this situation should be remedied as rapidly as possible, it is not as surprising as it first appears. The importance of health protection and education in the schools was not generally perceived until 1917, when the results of the army medical examinations shocked the nation into a realization of the cost of neglecting health. Rural schools lagged in inaugurating health programs primarily because of their inadequate financial resources. Encouragement may be drawn from the increasing attention being paid to health today by practically all rural schools and the existence here and there of remarkably effective programs.

In part because of close co-operation between the state department of health and the state department of education, Tennessee has been unusually successful in promoting health programs in the schools. At the state level and in four or five counties co-ordinators have been appointed, each of whom functions as a representative both of the public health department and of the schools (see chap. xvi). A still larger number of counties have adopted the state-sponsored blue-ribbon program. A child is awarded a blue-ribbon if he (a) is making satisfactory progress in his studies, (b) is amenable to the ordinary requirements of school discipline, (c) has been reasonably co-operative in the practice of health habits, and (d) is free of remediable physical defects and meets certain immunity standards.

The award of blue ribbons is a means of encouraging children to follow good health practices and of stimulating parents to immunize them and correct whatever remediable defects their physical examinations uncover. Competition between children is rarely over-

emphasized. The intrinsic importance of good health, of the correction of physical difficulties, and of immunization against certain diseases is stressed to pupils and parents alike. All pupils are encouraged to get their blue ribbons.

County interschool blue-ribbon contests are held, but here again the objective is to stimulate all the participating schools, so that in a sense each will be a winner. The prize-winning school is the one that has the largest percentage of blue-ribbon pupils and the most satisfactory school environment from the standpoint of health. The state suggests that the awarding of a prize to the winning school be made a public event.

In Obion County, the winner of the interschool blue-ribbon contest is announced at a special fete day for the entire community. All schools are dismissed, and the blue-ribbon winners—in 1940, three thousand strong—march in a parade to the ball park in Union City, the county seat. Each school wishing to do so may enter a float dramatizing the value of health. The preparation of these floats is a community affair; youngsters, their parents, and teachers work days to develop clever ideas, and prizes are awarded by local merchants for the best floats exhibited by schools of various sizes. Each school elects its own king and queen, and the winning school has the right to name the king and queen of the entire festival.

At the ball park the ceremony varies from year to year. In one recent year each school played a folk game or put on a folk dance. The next year each school acted one episode in a pageant representing the coming of spring.

The 1940 festival was witnessed by ten thousand to fifteen thousand people—a bigger crowd than the circus draws to town. But blue-ribbon day in Obion County is more than a community holiday which draws people together and gives them a sense of pride in their children and in their schools. Additionally it is a means of dramatizing the value of health not only to the children but to the adults of the community.

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The statement that each Virginia teacher maintains files of health literature for circulation to parents is drawn from *Newer Types of Instruction in Small Rural Schools*, p. 40.

The account of Bulloch County's health program closely follows *Community Organization for Health Education*, pp. 11-18.

Page 202. The list of components of a desirable school health program is taken from *Education in the Forty-eight States*, p. 77. The order in which the components are listed has been somewhat altered.

Pages 204-5. For a more complete account of the project of the school near Clarence, New York, see *Modern Education in the Small Rural School*, pp. 335-39.

The quotation is from *Education in the Forty-eight States*, p. 83.

Information about traveling clinics conducted by the Texas Department of Health was supplied by George B. Wilcox, School of Education, Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas. The child guidance clinics conducted in various communities in New York State by the State Department of Mental Hygiene are referred to in Paul W. Chapman, *Guidance Programs for Rural High Schools*.

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CHAPTER X

THE SCHOOLS AND RURAL RECREATION

RECREATION constitutes a traditional field of interest for rural schools. In sparsely settled areas the school has always been one of the major socializing influences. Simply by bringing isolated children together, the rural school has played an important part in their social education; the full value of this aspect of "going to school" is just beginning to be recognized. In addition, the rural school has nearly everywhere been used for community leisure-time activities—for club meetings, lectures, box suppers—to say nothing of the "exercises" and dramatic essays of pupils, which serve as occasions for general get-togethers.

Despite the contributions of the school and a number of other agencies which foster leisure-time activities, the recreational needs of rural people are not being adequately met. The operation of certain social and economic forces has given rural people an unprecedented amount of free time and has markedly increased the opportunity for recreation. While mechanization and more efficient farming and housekeeping practices have decreased the amount of labor required on the farm and in the home, the farm population has grown in size. As a consequence unemployment has made its appearance in rural America, the labor of considerable numbers of people, especially among youth, is needed only during peak seasons or for chores, and increased leisure has been brought within reach of practically everyone. Although many rural people have tended to use some of the additional time at their disposal for further work, there has been a considerable reduction in the length of the working day.

For the time being the defense program has arrested and even reversed the trend toward a shorter working day, for it has drawn youths and others away from farms at the same time that it has stepped up the demand for agricultural products. Once the current emergency is over, however, there is every reason to believe that the long-trend forces will again assert themselves. But even if no more

leisure becomes available to rural people for a number of years, the development of a broad program and of increased facilities for recreation is needed to make up for existing deficiencies and to satisfy the demand which has developed for new forms of diversion. The almost complete disappearance of many country activities of yesterday—log-rollings, corn-huskings, barn-raisings—has created a need for new social activities which are equally satisfying. At the same time that they have furnished entertainment, the automobile, the movies, and the radio have whetted the appetite of rural people for a wider range of recreational opportunities.

The waste of leisure time.—Because of the lack both of training in constructive use of leisure and of opportunities which provide enriching recreational experiences, rural people have failed to take full advantage of the time which has become available to them for recreation. Hours have been wasted in unproductive loafing and unwholesome and injurious activities. To some of the unemployed and underemployed, far from being a boon, leisure time has been a source of bitterness and even of personal demoralization. Said one unemployed youth, "All my time is spare."

Unemployment can be, and is being, directly attacked. At the same time rural people are recognizing the necessity of providing for the increased amount of leisure which they will enjoy even when unemployment is reduced to a minimum. Well-planned recreation programs are one means of making increased leisure the benefaction it should be. In a growing number of communities rural people are attempting to provide rich, diversified, and satisfying recreational activities for themselves. Rural schools are often in the forefront of agencies co-operating with these efforts. Modern rural schools are also making more ample provision for the recreational needs of pupils and are beginning to recognize their obligation to prepare them for the wise utilization of the free time they will have as adults.

Some values of recreation.—The value of recreation, of the whole range of activities engaged in primarily because of the pleasure and satisfaction they afford, is just beginning to be fully understood. In a pioneering rural society, where there is a limitless amount of work to be done, there is almost inevitably a certain suspicion of anything as apparently useless as recreation. Indeed, since activities engaged

in primarily for pleasure may tempt one away from one's work, there is some tendency to disparage them. Many forms of amusement are stigmatized as sinful. While rural people have always engaged in a certain amount of recreation, some of it in connection with their work, until recent years, when more leisure time became available, recreation was often tolerated as a necessary relief from work rather than regarded as an activity possessing intrinsic value.

Transitionally, play was defended as a means of keeping the idle out of mischief—a kind of “social prophylactic.” Many studies confirm the suggestion of common sense that it has value in this connection: that adequate recreation programs for youth, for example, tend to reduce juvenile delinquency. Leisure-time activities that permit a wholesome satisfaction of young people's desire for excitement, companionship, and self-expression are one of the most practical of antidotes against antisocial and undisciplined forms of behavior. In addition, however, it is now recognized, recreation has many positive values of the highest importance.

At all age levels recreation may contribute to physical, mental, emotional, and social development. For children play is a way of imaginatively grasping the meaning of adult situations and responsibilities. In addition, play satisfies children's desire for “fellowship, recognition, adventure, creative expression and group acceptance.” The recreational activities of youth provide opportunities for companionship with the opposite sex and the gradual assumption of independence. From childhood to old age participation in appropriate sports is conducive to physical well-being, and participation in dramatic and musical activities contributes to intellectual and emotional growth. Many leisure-time activities have obvious educational values, and the line between recreation and education cannot be drawn hard and fast.

The social values of recreation cannot be overemphasized. There is perhaps no better way to get acquainted with people than to play with them. By bringing people closer together, recreation has contributed to the success of many rural activities and agencies. Teachers and extension workers, among others, have found that they could work more effectively with the people in their areas after getting to know them better at picnics and similar social affairs. Well-planned

entertainment has contributed to the success of many rural clubs, both by attracting larger attendance and by cementing groups together, thus facilitating action. In rural areas, where old and young often enjoy their leisure hours together, recreation has strengthened the family, providing opportunities for members to laugh and play together, relieving monotony, and releasing tensions. It is no exaggeration to say that satisfactory provision for recreation contributes to community stability. When people's recreational needs are adequately met, they are more content in their homes, in the organizations of which they are a part, and in their general community life.

The dearth of rural recreational opportunities.—Unfortunately, while the desire of rural people for recreation is growing, the numerous benefits it affords are not yet generally understood. Rural people have lagged behind urban dwellers in developing what might be called a recreational attitude toward life—a recognition that leisure time is not necessarily wasted time and an awareness of the many satisfying and enriching ways in which free hours may be spent. Few members of the present rural adult population had adequate opportunities as children to acquire the recreational skills and abilities which are necessary for the fullest enjoyment of leisure. Their play experiences were often restricted; their education short and formal, with little emphasis on the development of either appreciative capacities or proficiency in leisure-time pursuits. Thus the lives of many rural people are poor even in those recreational experiences which require little or no organization—which can be enjoyed by an individual, a family, or any group, however small and informal, with a zest and aptitude for play. Experiences of this character, casual and self-initiated, constitute a large and valuable portion of a well-balanced recreational diet.

It is in connection with provisions for more highly organized and social forms of recreation, however, that deficiencies are most conspicuous in rural America. Lingering negative attitudes about "having fun" are by no means the only factor inhibiting the development of rural recreation. Poverty, which handicaps rural people in providing education, library, and health services, hampers them also in making provision for their recreational needs; indeed, the deficiencies in school and library facilities contribute to the difficulty

of developing recreation programs. The isolation of people in the open country makes it troublesome and expensive to bring them together. Studies made in twelve Mississippi counties show that on the average country people live more than five miles away from the nearest community center. In some areas poor roads add to the difficulty of assembling large groups. Despite the reduction which has taken place in the length of the working day, it was estimated in 1933 that, on the average, farm men and women were still working from ten to twelve hours daily. Furthermore, rural people begin to assume adult responsibilities comparatively early in life.

Such factors as these have seriously impeded the development of social forms of recreation, including dramatics, music, and athletics, which require planning, trained leadership, and adequate physical facilities. Few rural areas include enough people with both special competence in some field and the ability to organize and direct recreation programs, and rural communities are severely handicapped in employing full-time recreation leaders. The National Recreation Association has estimated that in 1935 rural areas had only 4 per cent of the number of full-time public recreation leaders they needed.

In most localities there are equally critical deficiencies in physical resources for organized recreation. The limited recreational facilities of most rural schools will be commented on later in the chapter. The majority of rural churches have neither land which could be used for play nor social rooms and kitchens where food for gatherings might be prepared. In many rural communities there are few or no suitable places for large assemblies and for musical and dramatic events. Rural areas have lagged in providing parks, playgrounds, athletic fields, and tennis courts, but the lack of such facilities for outdoor play is perhaps more keenly felt in villages than in the open country. In many parts of the nation village youth complain that their opportunities for outdoor recreation are highly restricted. Many areas once used for athletics, hiking, or camping have fallen into private hands; some of the most attractive spots are reserved for the summertime use of vacationers from the city. Village youth too often find that "the old swimming holes are silted up or fenced off."

The lack of things to do.—Even for the type of recreational activi-

ties which can be engaged in by individuals or small, informal groups, facilities in most rural areas are inadequate. The deficiencies in rural library service and the meager cultural resources of many rural homes have already been discussed. Many rural people have limited opportunity even for a recreational activity so taken for granted by city dwellers as reading. Only seven rural families in ten, as compared with nine out of ten city families, possess radios.

The total effect of these deficiencies is that in most rural areas there simply are not enough satisfying ways of spending leisure time. Inevitably, there is some resort to undesirable commercialized recreation, for example to pool halls and roadhouses, which are increasing in number in rural areas, where they are rarely strictly supervised. Another result equally unfortunate, although it attracts less attention, is that a large amount of time which might be spent profitably and pleasurably simply goes to waste.

Most of the following pages of this chapter are devoted to a description of the provisions for recreation which have been made in various rural communities. But if the chapter is not to give a completely erroneous impression, the deficiencies which exist must be kept in mind. Even communities which have good programs in one field, it must be remembered, may have no arrangements for satisfying many other recreational needs. To be adequate, recreation programs must be broad, diversified, balanced, rich in opportunities for people of different ages and interests. Few rural areas now provide programs of this character.

Moreover, many members of the rural population are unable to take advantage of such leisure-time opportunities as are available. Because recreation appears less essential than many other needs, expenditures for it fall off very rapidly as one goes down the income scale. A National Resources Committee study of consumer purchases shows that in 1935-36 families with incomes of less than five hundred dollars spent only eighteen dollars on leisure activities, and hundreds of thousands of farm families are included in this low-income group. Rural youth in general have little money to spend for recreation, although perhaps they have greater need than other groups in the population for satisfying ways of utilizing their spare time. Such facts as these suggest the particular importance in rural

areas of free or inexpensive leisure-time activities. Even so far as participation in such activities is concerned, however, those low in the economic scale are severely handicapped. Lack of money for such things as equipment, transportation, and membership in organizations bars many rural people even from those recreational activities which are sometimes thought of as being equally available to all.

The present favorable prospect.—Despite the very real obstacles rural people face in providing rich leisure-time opportunities, there are grounds for expecting a gradual expansion of rural recreation. Because of the unusual conditions resulting from the defense emergency, farmers are hard pressed at present, but the long-time trend is toward a shorter working day. In the country, as in the city, there is an increasing disposition to use leisure time for enjoyable and enriching activities. Yesterday's distrust of recreation is being replaced by a demand for abundant recreational opportunities.

The defense program, furthermore, has focused the nation's attention on the inadequacy of recreational facilities in many rural areas—a development which may stimulate federal participation in meeting recreational needs. Numerous federal agencies, including the W.P.A., the N.Y.A., the C.C.C., the National Park Service and the Forest Service, are now actively engaged in the field of recreation, and rural as well as urban people benefit from their activities. The expanding recreation program of the Co-operative Agricultural Extension Service is conducted entirely for the benefit of the rural population. Under the existing land-use program of the nation, millions of acres of land are being converted into parks and recreation areas.

Although they still require outside help, each year rural people become better situated to supply their own recreational needs. Their schools are becoming better equipped to serve as recreation centers. The number of trained rural recreation leaders is rapidly growing. Improved transportation facilities make it easier to draw people together from wide areas and to organize programs in accordance with people's age, sex, or particular interests. Finally, in the provision of recreation, as in the provision of educational and health services, rural people are learning to overcome limitations of re-

sources by developing efficient administrative units. Successful community and county recreation councils have been organized in many parts of the country.

COMMUNITY AND COUNTY RECREATION COUNCILS

The recreation council of Teton County, Montana, one of the most successful in the entire nation, can trace its origin to a dinner meeting held in 1922 to discuss serious agricultural problems. Entertainment—singing, games, stunts—contributed to the success of the meeting, which became an annual event and soon attracted a larger crowd than could be accommodated in local restaurants. Now entirely social and recreational, the affair, which is called a "Fun Feed," has grown to such size that it has become necessary to engage someone to handle it and to purchase the dishes, tables, and benches which are needed for it. Each community in Teton County presents one entertainment feature at the "Fun Feed," and the evening is concluded with dancing, usually to old-time music.

Gatherings to make preparation for the "Fun Feed" suggested the desirability of organizing recreation programs in the various communities. The need for trained leadership was recognized, and in 1933 the Teton County Recreation Association was organized. It was expected that its meetings would serve as a training school, with the various local leaders in attendance getting ideas to take back to their respective communities. In addition, between 1933 and 1940 seven training courses in recreation leadership were offered in Teton County under the direction of the National Recreation Association and the Extension Service.

The Teton County Recreation Association, composed of the chairmen of community recreation committees and some county officials, meets monthly except during the summer. It has assumed responsibility for developing a leisure-time program which will interest and reach all groups in the county. It works through and with schools, churches, lodges, 4-H clubs, home demonstration clubs, and, of course, the community recreation councils.

The Association takes direct charge of recreation programs at the county level. In addition to the "Fun Feed," it sponsors an annual three-day home-talent Chautauqua which usually attracts in the

neighborhood of twelve hundred people. Outside speakers are invited to address the Chautauqua, but otherwise it is entirely put on by Teton County residents. They write the plays which are given, adapt or write all music, and make all necessary scenery and costumes. Local community choruses participate, and pageants are sometimes staged. In an average year more than a hundred and fifty people play an active part in presenting the Chautauqua.

The programs of other recreation councils.—Teton County's "Fun Feed" and home-talent Chautauqua are unique, but many other counties have recreation councils—in many cases at both the county and the community levels—which are sponsoring rich and well-rounded leisure-time programs. In Milam County, Texas, awareness of the need for recreation leaders led to the holding of a recreation school where rural dramatics, singing, and folk games were studied. In the wake of the school a county recreation committee was organized and an extensive social recreation program was launched. A one-act county dramatic tournament was projected in which ten communities participated the first year. Eleven communities entered a song contest. A county-wide New Year's party was held. Eight communities began to sponsor regular monthly recreation programs, and six more offered programs from time to time. In the first year of organized recreation planning, ninety different programs were presented, which attracted an attendance of ten thousand people. Besides plays and sings, activities included folk dancing, costume parties, and debates.

Benton County, Arkansas, has a well-organized county recreation program and seventeen community recreation committees. At the county level two dramatic tournaments are held, one for 4-H clubs and one for home demonstration clubs. Over 130 women have been organized into a county chorus. In 1939 two pageants were presented, the first of which attracted an audience of five thousand and the second seven thousand, the largest crowd ever seen in the county seat. One of the most active communities in the county, Centerton, holds monthly "neighborhood nights," which attract from 55 to 125 people. It has a community song leader and accompanist and an orchestra, composed of six boys and girls, which performs at social affairs. In many other rural localities there are equally energetic

recreation councils. In Mississippi alone, in 1937, there were thirty-two county councils, which sponsored programs in 463 communities.

Some common procedures of recreation councils.—With few exceptions the rural counties which are most adequately meeting their recreational needs are following a number of procedures in common. They have usually organized both county and community recreation councils and thus have an ideal machinery for providing recreation efficiently. Most programs can be held in local communities or neighborhoods, where it is natural and convenient for people to assemble, but those which call for broad participation or a considerable expenditure of money can be planned on a county basis. The county councils co-ordinate the efforts of community groups and stimulate them by keeping them in close touch with one another.

The membership of successful county and community recreation councils is usually carefully selected so as to give representation to the different organizations and social groups in the area. While many councils operate in a very informal fashion, they perform their main task—the planning of recreation—with great care. Except for those councils which have deliberately confined themselves to one age group or some one field, such as athletics, the objective of recreation councils is a rich and well-balanced leisure-time program for all age groups and sections of the population. The needs and resources of the area to be served are both carefully assessed, and the co-operation of all community agencies is enlisted in order to secure the richest possible program and to avoid wasteful overlapping and competitiveness. Every effort is made to obtain full utilization of existing facilities, and possibilities for augmenting facilities are explored. Many councils have made exhaustive inventories of the actual and potential physical resources for recreation in their areas, including natural beauty spots, parks, marginal land which might be put to use, and play fields and buildings which are being, or could be, utilized for various types of recreation.

The more successful recreation councils strive to gear their programs to the interests of the population. Popular programs are often developed around local customs or the traditions of numerically strong nationality groups. For example, in St. Louis County, Minnesota, an old Finnish winter festival, Laskiainen Day, has been re-

vived. It is celebrated with the sports, folk games, dances, songs, and foods traditional to the day. In planning programs, account is also taken of the farmer's busy seasons and the school calendar. Teton County's "Fun Feed" is always held during February or March and its Chautauqua in September or October.

Selection and training of recreation leaders.—Localities with well-organized leisure-time programs have placed particular stress upon the discovery and training of recreation leaders. County recreation council meetings have provided opportunities for exchange of experience and informal training, and in Milam County, Texas, and some other places recreation leaders have met at regular intervals in order to learn from one another. In addition, a number of national organizations have interested themselves in the training of rural recreation leaders. The Agricultural Extension Service has been particularly active in sponsoring training institutes, and it has had the active co-operation of the National Recreation Association and, in certain communities, of the W.P.A. and such organizations as the Grange, the Farm Bureau, and the Farmers' Union.

Recreation institutes are usually held on a county or district basis and last three or four days. However, intensive one-day training courses are frequently offered at the county level, sometimes to follow up the work of district institutes, and state-wide and regional institutes are held in some parts of the country. Instruction is usually supplied by members of state Extension Service staffs, experts from the National Recreation Association, county extension workers, W.P.A. recreation supervisors, and local people talented in particular fields. Institutes ordinarily cover a broad field, such as music, drama, camping, or social games, or even a number of such fields. In some cases, however, attention is concentrated on some relatively restricted phase of recreation, such as play-writing or club leadership.

Rural people have been quick to recognize the value of recreation institutes, which provide a convenient and inexpensive means of training volunteer leaders for social leisure-time programs. Because recreation covers so many different activities, there is a need for a large number of such leaders in every community. Even where a paid leader of broad experience is in charge of a community recrea-

tion program, he usually requires assistants in some fields. Similarly, skilled local volunteer leaders are needed to supplement the efforts of extension workers, and nearly every rural organization can profitably utilize the services of one or more well-trained recreation leaders from among its own membership. The majority of those who attend recreation institutes are not paid recreation leaders, or persons who do a certain amount of recreation work in connection with their regular employment, such as teachers and extension workers. They are rather volunteer leaders—individuals with potentialities for directing leisure-time activities from 4-H clubs, the Boy Scouts, older rural youth organizations, home demonstration clubs, P.-T.A.'s, lodges, farm organizations such as the Grange, rural church groups, and, of course, community and county recreation associations. In both New York and Illinois more than 3,500 recreation leaders or prospective leaders attended training institutes in 1939, and in sparsely settled Arkansas forty-one institutes attracted 1,760 people.

Many rural communities have given special attention to training outstanding older youths as recreation leaders. Many unemployed or underemployed young people have both a capacity for leadership and skill in particular recreational fields. Some of these youths have been sent by community organizations to recreation institutes, with the result that their ability is conserved, developed, and made use of by the community instead of being wasted. So that they will have opportunities to apply what they have learned, in some places extension workers have organized "flying squadrons" of youths who are ready on short notice to direct recreational activities at community social affairs. Proficient service as volunteer leaders may become a route to employment for at least some youths as the number of paid rural recreation workers increases. In any case, the use of promising young men and women as recreation leaders helps sustain their morale and benefits their communities.

RURAL RECREATIONAL AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS

Many nation-wide organizations are attempting to stimulate the development of recreation programs in rural America. The activities sponsored by one agency, the Co-operative Agricultural Extension Service, constitute a representative cross-section of rural recreation

today. Although it could use a great number of additional workers, the Extension Service is splendidly staffed to promote the development of rural leisure-time activities. In its national office, in the Department of Agriculture, there is a specialist in rural recreation. Every state extension staff includes at least one person interested in some phase of recreation, and twenty-eight states have employed recreation specialists or rural sociologists who devote some of their time to recreation. In a number of states, the land-grant colleges, to which the state extension staffs are attached, do a great deal to foster recreational activities. At the local level, as of June 30, 1941, including both white and Negro personnel, there were 3,223 county agents, 2,131 home demonstration agents, 304 club agents, and 1,195 assistant agents, all of whom were interested—some of them most actively—in the enrichment of rural social life.

"The play's the thing."—Mention has already been made of the drama-training schools sponsored by the Extension Service. It is also active in sponsoring dramatic tournaments and festivals which place less stress than tournaments on competition and more on developing understanding, among participants and members of the audience alike, of the merits and weaknesses of the plays presented. In many parts of the country dramatic festivals or tournaments are held at both the county and the state levels. State extension staffs have developed a number of successful means of arousing interest in the festivals and of stimulating among rural people the writing, production, and enjoyment of plays. In some states play-lending libraries have been organized; in others bulletins have been issued on various phases of play production. Arkansas has conducted demonstrations to show rural dramatic groups how to provide good stage facilities at low cost, both in auditoriums and in suitable outdoor locations. The drama specialist on the Iowa state extension staff furnishes individuals with material on writing plays, gives dramatic groups rehearsal help, and serves as judge and critic at county drama festivals. Each year the Iowa Farm Bureau holds a one-act play-writing contest, and in Massachusetts and a number of other states the land-grant college sponsors a contest.

In part as a consequence of the stimulation provided by the Extension Service and other agencies, rural people are writing and pro-

ducing plays in surprising numbers. In Arkansas alone over a thousand plays, participated in by approximately seven thousand individuals, were presented in a recent year. In addition to groups affiliated with the Extension Service—home demonstration clubs, 4-H clubs, older rural youth organizations, and farm bureaus—amateur dramatic groups, granges, P.-T.A.'s and church societies often produce plays. To commemorate anniversaries and mark important occasions, such as the provision of electricity in a particular area, a number of organizations sometimes collaborate to stage elaborate pageants.

Music, the visual arts, and handicrafts.—The Extension Service is active also in fostering the interest of rural people in other cultural pursuits, especially music and the visual arts, and in handicrafts. To stimulate the activities of musical groups, devices similar to those already mentioned in connection with the discussion of dramatics are employed. Leaders are trained at recreation institutes; county and state festivals and tournaments are held for rural choruses, orchestras, and bands. During recent years hundreds of choruses and a large number of orchestras and bands have been organized in rural areas. In addition to their appearances at county and state festivals, these musical groups give local concerts and perform at farm organization meetings, county picnics, and church services. In various parts of the country they have presented operettas, musical pageants, and minstrel shows. They have revived old folk songs, performed over the radio, and caroled their neighbors at Christmas time. In Maryland some music is now provided at all meetings of organizations affiliated with the Extension Service.

The contribution that music can make to the life of those who lack special ability as singers or players has not been forgotten by the Extension Service. Community sings and home singing have been encouraged. A number of states have organized excellent courses in music appreciation. Radio lectures have been given in connection with some of these courses, and in other places records have been lent to interested groups. In Indiana and some other states song-of-the-month booklets, containing interesting information about one song for each month of the year, have been prepared for distribution among home demonstration clubs and other rural organizations.

In a number of states the Extension Service attempts also to stimulate the interest of rural people in the visual arts—painting, drawing, and sculpture. Its activities in this field dovetail not only with the encouragement of drama and music but also with the emphasis on the importance of attractive homes and pleasing personal appearance; many phases of home demonstration and 4-H Club work involve the consideration of principles of color and design. Appreciation of the visual arts is fostered through demonstrations and exhibits. Creative expression is encouraged by exhibits of original work which rural people themselves have done.

The Extension Service and other agencies are actively promoting an interest in handicraft work among rural people. In 1939 more than 134,000 adults, 27,000 boys, and 52,000 girls engaged in handicraft projects sponsored by the Extension Service. Handicraft work is, of course, educational, and in many instances a means of supplementing income, but, in addition, it is an enjoyable and satisfying diversion. Some emphasis is almost always placed on such factors as design and color harmony, and many of the articles made serve to beautify rural homes. Groups sometimes concentrate on articles suitable for Christmas gifts and on decorations for parties and holiday seasons. In some states 4-H Club handicraft work is closely linked with sports, with members constructing much of their own play equipment.

Getting away from home.—The excitement and stimulation which a change of scene affords have tempted rural people in increasing numbers to take trips and go camping. These activities, too, have been encouraged by the Extension Service and a number of other agencies, including schools and churches. Trips are often undertaken by organized groups, such as 4-H clubs or home demonstration clubs. Journey's end may be a near-by or distant city, a famous historical spot, or an unusually interesting farm. In 1939 a group of Texas 4-H Club boys used some money they had earned in hog-improvement work to take a ten-day trip to the Iowa State Fair.

Camps for rural people have been established by the Extension Service and other agencies in all parts of the country, and year by year they are attracting a larger attendance. Separate camps for men and women and for different age groups are often provided, but

well-supervised camps for all groups are even more numerous, and in some parts of the country parents and children troop together to family camps. Camps typically last three to six days, but two-week camps are sometimes held for younger people, and one- or two-day camps are not uncommon. Short or long, camps are operated with the utmost economy so that they will not be beyond the reach of rural people. Like trips, camps are rich in educational possibilities; for example, they furnish unsurpassed opportunities for demonstrations of good practice in sanitation, personal hygiene, and the planning and preparation of meals. But their recreational benefits are equally important. Camps provide a change from the humdrum life of everyday and give those in attendance an opportunity to enjoy rich days of social life, play, and athletics in pleasant surroundings. They introduce many individuals to games and pastimes which can be enjoyed when they return home. Frequently they increase the camper's appreciation of the world he lives in by stimulating his interest in birds, trees, flowers, and wild life.

Recreational activities of the W.P.A.—Because the Extension Service functions almost entirely in rural areas and closely reflects in its activities the wishes and interests of rural people, who share in its administration, its contributions in meeting leisure-time needs have been stressed in the above discussion. However, many other agencies are actively engaged in the field of rural recreation. The activities of the schools will be discussed later in the chapter, and churches and libraries also furnish important recreational services. In addition, a number of state and federal agencies participate in meeting recreational needs. The work of the National Park Service, the Forest Service, the C.C.C., and the departments administering state parks and forests in preserving and developing approximately two hundred million acres of land rich in scenic beauty, historical associations, and recreational possibilities benefits rural and urban dwellers alike. The activities of the W.P.A. and the N.Y.A. have made possible an enormous expansion both in the physical facilities for recreation in rural communities and in the amount of recreational service actually provided. The N.Y.A., which will be discussed in chapter xii, has contributed to recreation provision primarily by furnishing workers to public authorities and nonprofit-seeking private agencies to en-

able them to improve their equipment and expand their activities.

The W.P.A.'s contributions in meeting leisure needs are numerous and varied. Through 1940 it had built more than sixty-five hundred structures, such as grandstands, gymnasiums, pavilions, and bath-houses. It had built or improved more than forty thousand athletic fields, playgrounds, tennis courts, and parks. A substantial proportion of this construction work was done in rural communities. The Recreation Section of the W.P.A. supplies leadership "for all types of recreational activities that local communities may wish to try to establish." At the peak of its activities, in 1939, it was furnishing workers to more than seven thousand communities, nearly 70 per cent of which were rural. Over six thousand of these communities had no other source of organized public recreation. W.P.A. workers operated or assisted with the operation of more than twenty thousand community centers and supervised parks and playgrounds, beaches and swimming pools. They organized community nights, carnivals, and social games. They gave instruction in a wide variety of craft and hobby activities. So diverse were their undertakings that an exhaustive list of them could hardly be compiled.

In 1939 more than five million people, exclusive of spectators, took part in W.P.A. leisure-time activities. In addition to providing a tremendous volume of recreational service, there is considerable evidence that the W.P.A. has stimulated the development of locally supported recreation programs. Approximately 7,500 W.P.A. employees have found permanent work with local recreation agencies. It is probable that the benefits of the W.P.A.'s activities in the field of recreation will be felt for a considerable time to come. The additions it has made to the physical resources of thousands of communities will make it easier for them to finance leisure-time programs. The 140,000 relief clients who have been trained by the W.P.A. for some type of recreation leadership constitute a reservoir of ability which may be increasingly drawn upon as communities find the means and develop organizational arrangements for ministering to their own recreational needs.

Co-operation in recreation provision.—The W.P.A. has not devised recreational activities and then investigated the demand for them but rather has helped groups and communities to provide for felt

recreational needs. It is a W.P.A. policy that any activity for which it furnishes leadership must be originated by a local sponsor, such as a governmental agency or a private or semipublic group. All its activities in a state are placed under the sponsorship of one state agency, which is required to pay a quarter of their cost. As a further means of enlisting co-operation and gearing its program to real community needs, the W.P.A. encourages the organization of local advisory committees. In 1939 there were 5,500 such committees with 38,000 members.

Among all the agencies interested in the field of rural recreation, it is encouraging to note, there is growing recognition of the importance of co-operation. Even in localities which do not have recreation councils, the provision of recreation increasingly involves collective action on the part of many individuals, agencies, and groups. While the W.P.A. and N.Y.A. have made the largest contributions to the remarkable expansion in physical facilities for recreation which has been witnessed in rural areas in recent years, even the construction of such facilities is usually a co-operative undertaking rather than the work of some one agency. For example, the land for community buildings and clubhouses is often donated by churches or individual owners. Clubs conduct socials and entertainments to raise money for construction costs. Individuals and organizations donate labor and needed equipment. County and local appropriating bodies furnish funds and workers to supplement the contributions of the W.P.A. and the N.Y.A. During the past decade hundreds of buildings have been built in rural areas through such pooling of effort. By 1939 in North Carolina alone there were more than 230 community buildings and clubhouses.

Appropriately, community buildings are usually built to serve as recreation centers for the entire population and to furnish meeting places for all the organizations in their areas. For example, the building erected in Gunnison, Colorado, in 1939, at a cost of fifty thousand dollars, is used as a meeting place by the Rotary Club, women's clubs, and numerous other social groups. A well-equipped room in the basement is devoted to supervised recreation for children. The building contains a library, reading-room, and woodwork shop. One night each week high-school boys and girls are given exclusive pos-

session of the building for dancing, and on Saturdays it is reserved for the use of people from the surrounding countryside. While they are attending to their business, they may leave their children under supervision in the building.

THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOLS

Schools are playing an increasingly important part in the recreational life of rural America. In addition to providing recreational activities for pupils, rural schools have always made some contributions to the social life of their service areas, but they have been limited in what they could accomplish by their lack of resources and have seldom appreciated the full value of recreation. Today rural schools as a group are in a better position than ever before to provide recreational opportunities, and they recognize the desirability of providing them. In recent years both educators and the general public have tended to broaden their conception of the function of education. Many subjects concerned with the use of leisure time have been added to the curriculum. Teacher-education institutions have begun to provide preservice and in-service instruction in recreational fields.

The limitations under which rural schools operate even today must not be forgotten. It has been suggested that every rural school should be built to serve as a social center and workshop. To fulfill this ideal, each school would be situated on a four- or five-acre site to provide ample play space and would include a modest combination gymnasium-auditorium, shops, laboratories, reading- and work-rooms. While these specifications are obviously desirable, today not only most rural elementary schools but the vast majority of high schools fail to approximate them. Most small schools have practically no indoor facilities for recreation, and a surprising number are located on small unimproved plots of ground. Furthermore, many rural teachers have neither training nor special aptitude for recreation leadership, and crowded schedules restrict the time teachers have available for work with community groups.

However, in large part because of the progress which has been made in reorganization, the ability of rural schools to provide recreational opportunities has been greatly augmented. Stronger administrative units have made it possible for many schools to broaden

their curriculums and to support more adequate recreation programs. Most recently built schools have relatively satisfactory facilities for both indoor and outdoor forms of recreation. Well-planned consolidated schools have been strategically located to serve as focal points for closely knit neighborhood or community groups. Having larger teaching staffs, in most cases consolidated schools are in a better position to teach pupils the skills and abilities which participation in numerous leisure-time pursuits requires and to provide specialized leadership for their communities in a variety of recreational fields. Having larger student bodies, they can more easily organize play groups in accordance with pupils' age, sex, and interests. Not all the effects of consolidation, it is true, have favored the development of recreation programs. In some sparsely settled areas children living at a distance from consolidated schools spend a considerable portion of the time which might otherwise be devoted to play and extra-curriculum activities in transportation. Consolidation has meant the abandonment of many schools which had enjoyed a certain amount of use as community or neighborhood meeting places. In recent years, however, many such abandoned school buildings have been converted into recreation centers. On balance, the reorganizations which have taken place have undoubtedly improved the ability of rural schools to serve the recreational needs of their pupils and their communities.

Furthermore, a great number of schools not affected by reorganizations, even some which are very small, have improved their facilities for recreation. In particular, many schools have improved their playgrounds, laying out athletic fields, adding equipment, and planting grass, trees, and shrubbery. A number of schools have encouraged selected teachers to take training in recreation leadership. In Louisiana teachers are required to take at least nine semester-hours of class work in health and recreation, and they are given credit for work done at National Recreation Association institutes.

Recreation programs for pupils.—With better facilities and an awareness of the many values of recreation, modern rural schools are offering their pupils richer recreational opportunities than ever before. The improvement is by no means confined to their extra-curriculum programs or to the phases of the curriculum usually

thought of in connection with recreation, such as physical education. Improvement in these areas is part of a comprehensive effort to teach pupils how to spend their leisure hours enjoyably and profitably. Through both the curriculum and the extra-curriculum the more alert rural schools are attempting to cultivate interests and tastes which will provide pleasure and satisfaction in both childhood and adult life.

The changes in the regular school program are perhaps most evident in the teaching of cultural subjects, such as literature, art, and music. Instead of teaching pupils about art, schools are giving them more opportunities to view artistic masterpieces, or copies of photographs of them, and to experience at first hand the pleasure which such works can provide. Pupils are encouraged to draw, paint, and make things themselves—to experience the joy and satisfaction of creative activity. They are also given more opportunities to express themselves in words and are encouraged to read books for enjoyment as well as for knowledge.

In recent decades rural schools have enormously expanded their extra-curriculum program, particularly at the secondary-school level, so that in larger schools students have a considerable variety of activities from which to choose. Most educators are agreed that well-administered extra-curriculum activities have important educational, civic, and social values. In addition, as the voluntary nature of students' participation in activities suggests, in most instances they provide a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction. Many activities give students additional opportunities to pursue, in congenial groups, interests which have been stimulated by their regular school work. Others enable them to pursue interests or purposes not adequately represented in the curriculum. Such activities are obviously of value in enriching the program of small rural schools. Many activities—hobby clubs, dramatics, and school publication work, for example—give students a chance to use skills the exercise of which affords satisfaction. Finally, participation in activities provides opportunities for association with students with similar interests and for forming and strengthening friendships. Besides the immediate satisfaction they provide, many activities develop interests, tastes, and capacities for appreciation which will enrich adult life.

Few rural schools have remained entirely untouched by the tendency to broaden the scope of education to encompass the immediate and future leisure-time activities of pupils. Yet it must be remembered that only a small minority of schools offer well-rounded and balanced programs which provide pupils with proper opportunities for physical development and a variety of creative and social experiences. The resources and facilities of most rural schools are limited, and the desirability of teaching pupils how to use their spare time to best advantage has only recently become recognized. Even in cities scarcely more than a beginning has been made in the guidance of pupils toward discriminating use of such potentially rich cultural resources as the movies and the radio.

Out-of-school recreational opportunities.—In some places rural schools are making their playgrounds and other recreational facilities available the year round, an arrangement which benefits pupils as well as adults. A number of schools are showing increasing concern about the recreational opportunities for children provided by other community agencies. To make sure that their pupils will spend their free time pleasantly and profitably, some schools help them to plan their week-end and vacation activities. Many alert schools also work with county and community recreation councils or informally with individual agencies interested in recreation, to improve leisure-time opportunities for children and to co-ordinate the activities which exist.

A number of organizations not affiliated with the schools provide recreational opportunities for rural boys and girls. Four-H clubs, whose educational program was described in chapter vi, offer their more than 1,400,000 members a rich variety of recreation experiences, some of which have already been referred to. Besides handling their farming and homemaking projects, 4-H Club members find time for athletics, games, singing, dramatics, folk dances, picnics, and trips. They experience the pleasure of group co-operation in their community service activities and in many cases receive recognition from adults for the work they do. In 1939, 230,000 members attended the 3,700 camps held for 4-H Club boys and girls.

A number of the important farm organizations sponsor separate clubs for the children of members. The Boy Scouts recruit 10 per

cent of all rural boys who are of Scout age. In addition to such national organizations, there are hundreds of local clubs in rural areas for children of school age. A survey made in ninety-four small towns in Connecticut in 1934 revealed the existence of 660 children's societies, 125 of which were distinct in name and organization. Because small children cannot travel far from home and are limited in their choice of clubs to those in their schools and immediate environs, in most localities there are too few rather than too many organizations. However, it is desirable for some agency to take responsibility for keeping to a minimum overlapping and wasteful competition between organizations not affiliated with the school and for co-ordinating their work with that of school-sponsored clubs. Where no recreation council exists, the school is the most logical agency to assume this responsibility.

✕ *Meeting community recreational needs.*—In addition to providing more adequate recreational opportunities for their pupils, a growing number of rural schools are actively engaged in meeting the leisure-time needs of their communities. They are co-operating with other agencies, including recreation councils, making their facilities available when they are not in use by pupils, and offering various types of programs, many of which are supervised by teachers and other staff members. The participation of schools in meeting the needs of people for wholesome diversion is of particular importance in rural areas, where, despite the improvement witnessed in recent years, recreational resources are still markedly deficient. Even those rural communities which have good leisure-time programs in some one field, it must be remembered, seldom have enough activities to meet the interests of most of the population. In many communities the school is the only local public agency which has facilities and personnel that permit it to provide recreational opportunities. In rural areas generally it is essential in the provision of recreation, as in the provision of educational, health, and library services, that maximum use be made of all existing resources.

Active participation in meeting the recreational needs of the area it serves benefits the school as well as the community. Carefully planned recreation programs are almost always well attended. A number of rural schools have found that they attract many people,

among both youth and adults, who are not reached by any other type of activity. Some of these people later become interested in other school and community affairs. A successful leisure-time program strengthens the community and assimilates the school more closely into its everyday life.

The community leisure-time programs of the Lincoln Consolidated School and the Newark Valley High School have been described in chapter iv. In Obion County the larger schools open their gymnasiums and auditoriums to the community for folk dancing and games and hold weekly outdoor recreation parties at which people play softball, volley ball, quoits, tennis, or checkers—or just sit around and talk. In various parts of the country schools have improved their facilities, lighting playgrounds and athletic fields and buying extra equipment, in order to minister to the recreational needs of older youth and adults more satisfactorily. In a number of places adult groups have borne some or all of the cost of such improvements, which, of course, are of benefit to pupils as well as to their parents.

Co-operation with other agencies.—In the provision of recreation for older youth and adults it is particularly essential that rural schools co-operate with other agencies. Neither the school nor any other agency can hope singlehandedly to satisfy the diverse leisure-time interests of the entire population. In all parts of the country schools concerned with community recreation have recognized the desirability of co-operating with other agencies, of sharing personnel and facilities, and of enlisting the co-operation of the rural people themselves. In many places schools are members of recreation councils, and in a few instances they have taken the initiative in organizing councils.

Oshkosh, Nebraska, which has a village recreation council, furnishes a typical example of the way the school and other agencies sometimes co-operate in the provision of a leisure-time program. The village recreation center, which has a handicraft room and facilities for such games as table tennis, is housed in a building belonging to the Garden County High School. The village of Oshkosh appropriates money for the upkeep of the center, several N.Y.A. students have been assigned there, and W.P.A. workers are also employed.

A park playground is used for outdoor games. Without burdening any single agency, this unpretentious program attracted an attendance of over fifteen thousand at the recreation center and nearly three thousand at the park playground in 1939.

In St. Louis County, Minnesota, which is as large as the state of New Jersey, the schools play an equally important role in a far more elaborate leisure-time program. Recreation is carefully organized at both the county and the community levels. In addition to a county athletic council consisting of representatives of seventeen different sports, there are more than a hundred local sports committees which work in close co-operation with one another and with the leisure education department of the public school system. Each community has its own recreation program, but it is common for adjacent communities to join for certain events, and there are a number of activities at the county level, including a winter festival.

While hundreds of play areas have been installed in the county, the seventy-five schools are the principal centers of leisure-time activity. Classrooms, auditoriums, and gymnasiums are used for social gatherings and for courses in a number of recreational fields. Particularly during the winter, teachers often hold open house, with indoor games, entertainment, and refreshments, after evenings of outdoor play. In a period of three years the number of participants in organized athletics alone in St. Louis County increased from three hundred to over five thousand. It is estimated that in the course of a year one-third of the rural population of the county attends some leisure-time affair. But the most important outcomes of the recreation program cannot be measured statistically. Besides providing fun and pleasure, it knits the county together and adds to the effectiveness of all its social agencies and institutions, including the schools.

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CHAPTER XI

THE SCHOOLS AND RURAL SOCIAL WELFARE

IN EARLY 1935, when relief rolls were at their peak, approximately two and a half million rural families were receiving some form of public or private assistance. While many of these families later achieved self-support, other rural families were forced to apply for help. Between 1931 and 1937 about three and a half million rural households—one out of every four—received relief or some other type of assistance. The rural welfare problem has significance for rural schools if only because of its magnitude. A community-minded school cannot disregard conditions which in a six-year period reduced a fourth of the population to indigence and made life hard and precarious for countless others.

Relief rolls have dwindled in recent years as a result of economic improvement stimulated in large part by the defense program, but there are still millions of rural children of school age in households in need of outside assistance. Many studies show that, as one would expect, these children are handicapped both in attending school and in securing full benefit from their education. Large numbers of children are forced to engage in undesirable types of agricultural labor which not only interfere with school attendance but impair their growth and health. The situation of such economically underprivileged children and the things being done to help them are obviously of direct concern to the rural school. It has an obligation to foster equality of educational opportunity and to co-operate closely with other agencies concerned with the well-being of children. In addition, the existence of a large-scale relief problem has many implications for the school's educational program.

THE RURAL WELFARE PROBLEM

Many of the factors that made the farm population so vulnerable to the collapse of agricultural prices in the early 1930's have already been discussed in chapter i. Long-term forces had changed the aver-

age American farm from a self-sufficient unit to a business venture producing one or two cash crops for the market. Valuable soil, timber, and mineral resources had been at least partially depleted by unsound exploitation. Farmers' equity in their farms had decreased and their debts and interest burdens had grown, leaving them exposed to the full force of deflation in agricultural prices and land values. Between 1914 and 1923 alone, when farmers were purchasing new land at high prices and investing in farm machinery to meet the abnormal World War I demand for agricultural commodities, their interest charges more than doubled.

The rapid contraction of European demand after the war caused a deflation in agricultural prices from which there was never a complete recovery. Throughout the twenties farm income was low. As was brought out in chapter i, in 1929 nearly half of all American farms produced less than one thousand dollars' worth of products, even when allowance is made for those consumed on the farm. Interest and rent payments, the disparity between agricultural and industrial prices, which steadily increased during the twenties, and the cost of rearing children, many of whom later migrated to urban areas, drained money from farm to city. Each year a large number of farmers lost their land and became tenants or agricultural laborers.

Thus the farm population as a group was poorly braced to withstand the unprecedented deflation which began in 1929. In three years the depression shrank farm income from twelve billion dollars to five and one-third billion dollars. Many farmers could no longer meet their interest payments and taxes, and bankruptcies and tax sales rose sharply. Those who kept their farms could not employ as many hired workers even at reduced wages, and farm employment declined. Simultaneously, industrial centers lost their capacity to absorb the surplus population of rural areas, and hundreds of thousands of young people who in better times would have migrated to cities were forced to remain on farms where there was little or no work for them to do. Oppressed by such conditions, there is little wonder that many farm people exhausted their resources during the 1930's and were forced to apply for public or private assistance.

★ *The situation of the rural-nonfarm population.*—In general, the twenty-four million rural dwellers whose income was not primarily

derived from agriculture suffered as much from the depression as the farm population. Many of these people depended on farming or farm work for part of their income. Others lived in villages whose fortunes rise or fall with those of the country areas they serve.

Still other rural nonfarm dwellers felt the impact of the depression upon industry. Many rural people were involved in the economic life of near-by cities. A far larger number were engaged in rural industries, such as lumbering and mining, and these too were hard hit by the depression. Employment in different types of mining, for example, declined from 33 to 65 per cent below 1929 levels. Like agriculture, mining and lumbering were particularly vulnerable to the depression because of unfavorable long-term trends. Long before 1929 the exhaustion of resources and the introduction of labor-saving machinery had curtailed opportunities for employment. All rural industries felt the impact of the depression to some extent. Contraction—in some places virtual cessation—of building operations threw nearly two hundred thousand rural building and construction workers on relief in early 1935.

Village unemployment and reduced farm purchasing power brought the depression home to those engaged in trade and service occupations in rural areas. Storekeepers, doctors, lawyers, and teachers all found it harder to make a living. No important section of the rural population remained untouched by the depression.

The impact of the depression on different groups.—The depression did not affect all groups of the rural population with equal severity, however. Among those engaged in agriculture farmowners were best situated to resist its impact, and at the time when relief rolls were largest, in early 1935, only one farmowner out of every seventeen was obliged to ask for assistance. In general, owners forced to apply for relief had smaller farms, less livestock and farm equipment, and heavier debts than their neighbors who had remained off relief.

Tenants were far less well prepared than farmowners to meet the onslaught of the depression. One out of every seven tenants was on relief rolls when they were at their peak, and one-fourth of all tenants received public assistance at some time during the depression. The tenants forced on relief were those with "poor land, small holdings,

little livestock and worn out farm machinery." One out of every twelve sharecroppers received relief in early 1935 and a large additional number were aided by rehabilitation loans. In the South about twice as many sharecroppers as other tenants were on relief.

The exact proportion of farm laborers on relief cannot be determined, but it is certain that it was high. In the winter of 1934-35 alone more than 275,000 farm laborer families received relief. The precarious position of farm workers is evident from the shortness of the period they were able to support themselves when they could not find work. Three months after losing their jobs, on the average, unless new employment materialized, they were forced to apply for relief. Tenants, in contrast, could maintain themselves for seven months and farmowners for thirteen months after losing their farms.

In the villages, too, marked variations were apparent in the impact of the depression on different groups. In June, 1935, one out of every eight village households was dependent upon relief. Fully 40 per cent of the villagers on relief were unskilled industrial workers. Another large group, approximately 25 per cent of those on relief, was composed of farm workers and others with agricultural experience. The next largest group consisted of skilled and semiskilled workers. Many village families had to secure relief because there was no member who could work. In 17 per cent of all village relief cases a woman was the head of the family. There were also many old people on village relief rolls.

Certain areas, like certain groups in the rural population, were most exposed to the havoc caused by the depression. The Appalachian-Ozark highlands, the cutover sections of the Great Lakes states, and the eastern and western cotton areas are characterized by chronically weak agricultural conditions. They contain a disproportionate number of large families and poor farms scarcely able, under the best of conditions, to support the people who work them. The piling-up of people on these farms during the depression further reduced the already low standard of living and compelled many families to seek help.

Depression and drought combined brought extreme destitution to the Great Plains states in the decade of the thirties. To begin with, the agricultural economy of these states was unsound because of in-

judicious use of the land and the pressure of a population disproportionately large in relation to the resource structure. To increase wheat production when prices were high, land which should never have been stripped of its natural covering was placed in cultivation, accentuating the area's vulnerability to draught. Depression and drought both struck in 1930, and devastating droughts ravaged the area in 1934 and 1936. Crops failed, and blinding dust storms dramatized man's failure to adjust the farming of the area to natural conditions. Numbers of farmers abandoned their farms, and the resources of thousands of those who remained were soon exhausted. At the peak of distress more than one-fifth of all the families in the area were dependent on public aid. In a single year the federal government had to extend help to more than half of the population in sixteen counties.

The educational status of the relief population.—Many studies of the relief population suggest that people's ability to withstand the depression was related not only to factors associated with their economic status but also to the amount of education they had received. While economic, social, and personal factors undoubtedly contributed to the situation, it is certain that as a group the adults who were forced to apply for relief were educationally as well as economically underprivileged. Of all people ten to sixty-four years of age on relief in October, 1935, 6 per cent had received no formal schooling, and more than one-fifth had had no schooling or had completed less than four grades. Rural adults as a group have a low educational status, but comparative studies show that those on relief had received even less education than those of their neighbors in the same occupational and age groups who were able to remain self-supporting. In forty-seven sample counties it was found that "the proportion of heads of households without any schooling was nearly three times as great in the relief as in the nonrelief population."

Even more disturbing to the welfare of a society committed to equality of opportunity is the educational status of children from underprivileged homes. All the evidence suggests that they are severely handicapped in securing the education they must have in order to be prepared to take their places as self-reliant, responsible, and contributive members of a democratic society. Unless this situa-

tion is remedied, there is a very real danger that poverty and ignorance will tend to perpetuate themselves—that a caste system will replace democracy in the United States.

The situation involves millions of American children, not a scattered few. Families on relief contain relatively more children under sixteen than are found in the general rural population. When the relief load was at its peak, in early 1935, there were three and a half million children under sixteen in rural households on relief. There were additional millions of children in households that were forced to apply for help at some other time during the depression.

Many studies have shown that these children from poor homes are handicapped in securing an education. During the age span when school attendance is compulsory, they are enrolled in school in the same proportion as children from nonrelief households, but it is doubtful if their attendance is as regular. It is certain that on the average they drop out of school sooner than other rural children. One study found that less than half of the children between twelve and nineteen years of age in rural relief households had completed grade school as compared with more than three-fifths of the children in nonrelief households. At age levels over sixteen years school attendance in rural areas is lower among children from homes on relief than it is among children from other homes. Retardation is also marked among these underprivileged children. They are handicapped in attending school, in profiting from the school program, and in making normal educational progress.

The reasons why this is so are not hard to discover. Children from underprivileged homes suffer from economic, physical, and psychological handicaps of the gravest kind. Often they cannot attend school because they lack suitable clothing or money for books and transportation. In many cases they get too little to eat and live in homes which are not safe or sanitary, much less conducive to their maximum physical and cultural development. Many studies have shown that as a group children from poor homes are ill nourished and sickly and that a disproportionate number of them have physical defects.

Child labor in agriculture.—Hundreds of thousands of rural children are forced to do hard farm work which interrupts their school-

ing and impedes their general development. Nearly all these children come from poverty-stricken homes where even the small amounts they can earn are desperately needed.

The value of giving children some work experience has been emphasized in this report, but chores and odd jobs which supplement and vivify school work and give children a feeling of confidence and social acceptance must be sharply distinguished from work which interferes with their growth and education. Much farm work done by children is of this latter character. As Beatrice McConnell points out:

Much of the agricultural child labor of today is very different from what it was when children worked mainly for their own parents on the home farm. The work of children in industrialized agriculture is not the educational process of the parent initiating his child into tasks that are an integral part of the traditional farm life. On the contrary; it is a highly commercialized, nearly always hard, repetitive labor characterized by long hours and unsuitable and often hazardous conditions of work, subject to competitive pressure.

Premature participation in this kind of farm work not only deprives children of the opportunity to secure an education but jeopardizes their health and development. The need for eliminating harmful child labor in agriculture is pronounced. The 1940 White House Conference on Children in a Democracy recommended "a minimum age of 16 years for employment in industrialized agriculture during school hours, and a minimum age of 14 for such employment after school hours and during vacation periods," and the Sixth National Conference on Labor Legislation made an almost identical recommendation.

In addition to making a direct attempt to eliminate child labor in agriculture, it is necessary to deal with the economic pressures which are largely responsible for its existence. Improving the economic situation of the rural population is the ultimate solution, and adequate provision for the needs of those in distress is the immediate necessity. The existing programs for meeting these needs will now be briefly discussed.

RURAL WELFARE PROGRAMS AND AGENCIES

Until the impact of the industrial depression made itself felt, only the most meager provision for those in need was made in rural areas.

County or township poor relief funds, the only source of public aid, were small in amount and administered by officials who lacked special training for welfare work and were burdened with innumerable other duties. The amount of private assistance available was also limited. In most instances emergencies and extreme destitution were met by neighborly assistance through church groups or welfare committees of local civic organizations, but almost no preventive or remedial services similar to those which had been developed in cities had made their appearance.

The depression quickly revealed the inadequacy of the existing machinery for dealing with rural distress. As was inevitable under a system which placed responsibility for relief on local governmental units, where needs were greatest, resources were least adequate and most quickly exhausted. In 1931 a few states began to aid their local units with state funds for home and work relief. In the latter part of 1932 the Reconstruction Finance Corporation made loans available to the states for unemployment relief.

Substantial federal help for relief, however, first became available to all states on a grant-in-aid basis in May, 1933, when the Federal Emergency Relief Administration was set up. Its establishment was of particular significance to rural areas. It meant that for the first time in every county in the United States there would be full-time paid workers whose job it was to know what was happening to persons in need. Because not enough trained and experienced social workers were available, in many predominantly rural states almost the entire F.E.R.A. staff was recruited from teachers, nurses, home economists, and engineers whose opportunities in their own fields had been limited by the depression. Through the F.E.R.A., which acquired experience and increased its proportion of trained workers as it went along, a tremendous program of work and home relief was carried on, with federal, state, and, in many places, local participation. Between 1932 and 1935 relief rolls mounted almost uninterruptedly as the depression affected more and more households and as people exhausted their savings. A special drought relief program had to be planned for the Great Plains area. In January, 1935, nearly 16 per cent of all the rural families in the nation were on relief.

The division of the relief population.—In 1935 the federal govern-

ment decided to return to the states responsibility for relief of unemployables and concentrate its attention on furnishing emergency employment to those on relief rolls who were able to work. The Works Progress Administration (later the Work Projects Administration) was organized to provide employment for the needy unemployed who were able-bodied.

The return of relief responsibility to the states has not worked out satisfactorily in all cases. Some states promptly established state-administered and state-financed relief agencies. Others left entire responsibility for relief to local governmental units. In most poorer states relief grants became more meager. As will be seen, in some states they declined to inadequate levels, and many people in need were denied relief altogether.

The W.P.A. assumed responsibility for paying security wages for useful work to the great majority of those on relief who were employable. It is estimated that in early 1936 alone almost two hundred thousand farmowners and more than two hundred thousand farm laborers were assigned to W.P.A. projects. W.P.A. wages have not been high, in rural areas averaging even below the national average (about \$57.50 a month in the 1940 fiscal year), but they have been generous in comparison with relief grants. They have been more nearly adequate in relieving distress and, it may be presumed, have had some stimulating effect on rural and national business conditions. W.P.A. projects have helped to sustain the morale of those they employed and have brought rural people educational and social services of value. In addition, they have resulted in many permanent improvements, such as new schools, playgrounds, roads, and soil and water conservation projects. By December 31, 1939, more than four hundred thousand miles of rural roads had been constructed or reconstructed by W.P.A. workers.

Yet it is apparent that work relief has certain disadvantages as a means of meeting the needs of rural people in distress. Projects must be planned for off-seasons or limited to others than farm operators, for it is essential that farmers not be drawn off the land when they should be making a crop. Another criticism is more basic: although work relief is expensive, it does nothing to alter the conditions which compelled those being helped to seek aid in the first

place. It is invaluable for tiding people over an emergency, but it does not help them to get re-established on a self-supporting basis on the land or meet the needs of the thousands of farm families who, under conditions such as have existed, are condemned to a life of chronic poverty. Other types of welfare programs are needed in rural areas in addition to the W.P.A.

The Farm Security Administration.—State relief officials in Alabama and Texas first recognized the desirability of lending money to farm families so that they could buy the tools, seed, and livestock they needed to become self-supporting in agriculture. The idea spread rapidly to other states, and in 1934 the federal government allotted money to the states for rural rehabilitation work. In 1935 many families on relief whose situation indicated they might become self-supporting were granted rehabilitation assistance. By the middle of the year help was being extended to 360,000 farm families.

In 1935 the rural rehabilitation program was taken over by the Resettlement Administration, and in 1937 this organization was succeeded by the Farm Security Administration of the Department of Agriculture. While it conducts several programs, the F.S.A., like its predecessors, has given most attention to making rehabilitation loans to needy farm families who cannot get credit from other sources but have good prospects for fighting their way back to self-support. The families are carefully selected and then are helped to succeed. Technically trained F.S.A. farm and home management supervisors aid each family in working out a plan for the efficient operation of its farm and home and help it solve the problems which arise in the execution of the plan. In some states groups of F.S.A. borrowers meet together to exchange ideas on farming operations.

Between 1935 and 1940 the F.S.A. and its predecessor organization made rehabilitation loans amounting to more than 385 million dollars to a total of 800,000 needy farm families. By 1940, 132 million dollars of this money had been repaid. Although the loan program had been in operation for only four years and the normal period of rehabilitation is five years, 110,000 families had paid off their loans in full and regained self-supporting status. On the basis of its experience to date the F.S.A. expects that approximately 80 per cent

of the funds loaned will eventually be repaid with interest. Allowing for losses as well as the expense of administration, the annual net cost of the rehabilitation loan program is less than \$75 for each family aided. A survey of 360,000 F.S.A. borrowers made at the end of the 1939 crop year showed that they had increased their net worth by nearly 83 million dollars—an average gain of \$230 per family. At the same time, by producing more food for home consumption and by other means, they had greatly improved their standard of living. Instead of being a burden on their communities, they contributed to their prosperity. On the basis of actual results to date the rehabilitation loan program must be adjudged an economical and successful means of helping needy farm families.

Additional F.S.A. activities.—The Farm Security Administration engages in several activities which benefit both its own clients and other low-income farm families. It has worked out an arrangement whereby debt-ridden farmers may seek to adjust their debts to their capacity to pay. Each debtor attempts to work out a satisfactory agreement with his creditors during meetings before a local debt-adjustment committee. By the middle of 1940 the debts of 125,000 low-income farm people had been scaled down by ninety-one million dollars through such negotiations. Because good health is essential to rehabilitation, as was brought out in chapter ix, the F.S.A. co-operates with local medical associations in sponsoring programs for furnishing low-cost medical care to farm families of limited means. It also makes co-operative or community loans to groups of low-income farmers for equipment or services which no one individual member of the group could afford, such as heavy farm machinery, pure-bred sires, storage facilities, and hatcheries. It is estimated that the thirteen thousand co-operative loans which have been made have benefited nearly three hundred thousand families.

The depression found many rural families on farms where they could never hope to make a decent living. Some of these poorly situated families lived in worn-out farming areas, cutover areas, or exhausted mining communities. Others lived on such small farms that they could not use modern farming methods and compete with large mechanized farms. The Farm Security Administration has resettled over fifteen thousand of these poorly situated farm families

in communities or on farmsteads where they can hope to rehabilitate themselves. The resettlement projects vary widely, but each of them attempts to demonstrate a better pattern of farming and rural community life.

The F.S.A. also administers the tenant purchase program under which competent tenants, sharecroppers, and farm laborers are given long-time loans at low interest to purchase land of their own. County committees, each consisting of three farmers, decide which applicants for loans are best qualified on the basis of character, ability, and farming experience to succeed as farmowners. Those granted loans are given guidance in farm and home management by F.S.A. supervisors. Between 1937 and 1940 tenant purchase loans enabled thirteen thousand families to secure farms of their own.

The tenant purchase program reaches relatively few of the nearly three million tenant families in the nation. The F.S.A. has, therefore, interested itself in the improvement of the entire tenancy system. It also performs certain services, to be discussed in chapter xvi, for migrant farm families. Finally, it makes a few additional types of loans and grants, including loans up to seventy-five dollars to enable the children of borrower families to participate in 4-H and Future Farmers of America club work. Through its various activities the F.S.A. has benefited a significant proportion of all low-income farm families, and it has helped more than one million families to get back on their own feet.

The Social Security Act.—In the development of rural public welfare, 1935 was a significant year not only because of the establishment of the W.P.A. but also because of the passage of the Social Security Act. The federal and state stimulation and financial assistance made available as a result of this legislation was of particular value to rural areas, where resources were limited and meager provision was being made for the groups for whom the legislation specified aid—the needy old, the needy blind, and dependent children. The Social Security Act brought sorely needed assistance to hundreds of thousands of dependent rural residents. Equally important, the Act resulted in the establishment or strengthening of welfare organizations at both the state and the county levels, thus laying the foundation for competent, professional administration of as-

sistance. Unfortunately, although the Act provides that the federal government will reimburse the states for up to 50 per cent of their expenditures for the indigent old, the indigent blind, and dependent children, within certain maximum grants, in some states programs have yet to be established for one or another of these groups. Even where the programs are in effect, there is great variation in the proportion of those in need who are receiving help and in the adequacy of assistance grants.

By June, 1940, forty-one states, the District of Columbia, and Hawaii had established programs for aid to dependent children. The object of these programs is to make it possible for children who are dependent because of the death, disability, or continued absence of a parent to be cared for in the home of some close relative—a parent, stepfather, stepmother, aunt or uncle, brother or sister, stepbrother or stepsister, or grandparent. As originally passed, the Social Security Act provided assistance to children under sixteen, but it was amended in 1939 to cover children up to eighteen who are in attendance at school. In 1940 nearly three hundred thousand rural children were receiving grants from programs of aid to dependent children.

The Social Security Act also provided a small federal appropriation to aid the states in establishing and extending welfare services in rural areas for homeless, dependent, neglected, and potentially delinquent children. Because only limited funds are available for these special child welfare services, they are offered only in selected areas where the need for them is evident. As their value is demonstrated it is hoped that they will be extended to other places. As of June 30, 1940, child welfare services were available in 512 rural counties and 69 New England towns. Seven hundred and thirty-five professional workers were devoting full time to child welfare work, and approximately forty-five thousand rural children were being aided. These were all children who presented special problems—handicapped, neglected or mistreated children, illegitimate children, children in danger of becoming delinquent because of environmental conditions, and children whose behavior was a source of trouble in school or community. Workers concerned themselves both with the individual needs of these children and with the development of com-

munity resources for the prevention of dependency, delinquency, and neglect. Wherever possible children were helped in their own homes, the homes of relatives, or foster-homes; only a few were placed in institutions.

The public welfare agency.—In order to qualify for federal grants-in-aid for the various public assistance programs established by the Social Security Act, a state is required to designate one agency to administer or supervise the expenditure of the grants and to make assistance available in all its subdivisions. As a result of this requirement each of the states now has both a state department of public welfare and a network of local welfare units. Except in a few states where counties have been combined into districts and in New England, where the town or township is the unit of organization, these units are usually established on a county basis. In every rural area, as well as in every urban community, there now exists a permanent agency, usually known as the department of public welfare, which is charged with the responsibility for meeting many social needs.

While the functions of the local public welfare department vary from state to state, it is everywhere the key welfare agency. In most places it administers general relief funds made available by state or local appropriations, as well as the grants for dependent children, the aged, and the blind. It handles the distribution of federal surplus commodities. It certifies people for W.P.A., C.C.C., and N.Y.A. work programs. In a few states it takes applications for F.S.A. assistance and makes the investigations and recommendations concerning grants.

The extent to which local public welfare departments are charged with responsibility for special services to children depends on the legislation of the particular state and on the arrangements worked out locally with the juvenile court and the schools. The laws of many states make local public welfare departments responsible for designated services to delinquent, dependent, neglected, and handicapped children. In five states legislation specifies that local welfare units may serve as probation officer if appointed by the court, and in Virginia this responsibility is mandatory.

State welfare departments, besides supervising local units, supplement their services in many ways. State staffs often include

specialists in child welfare and various phases of public assistance, nutritionists, psychiatrists, psychologists, and medical social workers, whose services are of particular value in rural areas, where local resources are usually limited. Most state welfare departments directly handle many activities relating to children, such as the investigation of adoptions and the inspection and licensing of agencies and institutions in the field of child care. State welfare departments and the Children's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor jointly plan the special child welfare services which are provided in selected rural areas.

Other rural welfare agencies.—In addition to the public welfare department, the W.P.A., and the F.S.A., many additional agencies are engaged in welfare work in rural areas. The C.C.C. and the N.Y.A., whose programs will be described in chapter xii, are attempting to improve the situation of needy young people. The American Red Cross has organized many rural county chapters, some of which have quasi-public status, even being charged with the administration of publicly appropriated funds.

A certain amount of welfare work is performed in rural areas by churches and church organizations, school organizations such as parent-teacher associations, health agencies, and philanthropic and social clubs. The private agencies engaged in welfare work vary from community to community, as do the services they perform. The aggregate amount of financial assistance the private agencies provide is usually small. Nevertheless, their work is of great value. They perform many types of services for which public agencies have not time or means. They give a number of socially minded lay individuals, many of whom have superior ability, an opportunity to participate actively in meeting the social needs of their communities.

RURAL SOCIAL WELFARE AND THE SCHOOLS

Besides alleviating distress, the welfare programs now in operation have improved the opportunity of millions of rural children to secure the benefits of an education. Even such a program as old age assistance has indirectly affected school attendance by relieving many men and women of the care of aged dependents and permitting them to give their children better opportunities. The aid to de-

pendent children program has, of course, been of more direct and significant help. The recent amendment providing for continued assistance to eligible children up to the age of eighteen if they remain in school should have far-reaching influence on school attendance. It relieves the children affected from pressure to begin to earn money. Relief grants, W.P.A. wages, and F.S.A. loans have facilitated school attendance for great numbers of rural children. At one time alone, it must be remembered, there were as many as three and a half million children under sixteen in families receiving public assistance.

Studies have been cited which show that children whose families are on relief drop out of school sooner and probably attend school less regularly than other rural children. Such studies do not disprove the value of public assistance but, on the contrary, establish the close relationship between economic status and educational opportunity. It may be presumed that the children studied would have been still more handicapped in securing an education if their families had not been helped and that, on the other hand, they would have had better educational opportunities if the assistance given their parents had been more adequate. Studies of destitute rural families who are receiving little or no public assistance—and such families exist in large numbers in certain states—show that their children are severely handicapped in attending school even though they may be enrolled in the same proportion as other children.

Welfare programs and children's school progress.—Rural welfare programs not only facilitate school attendance but help children to secure the maximum amount of benefit from their education. By improving living conditions and reducing worry and tension in poverty-stricken homes, public assistance grants enable large numbers of rural children to attend school physically and psychologically prepared to profit from the work they do there.

The workers who administer the aid to dependent children and the child welfare programs take an active interest in the school progress of the children with whom they work. Because a social worker has entree to the child's home and studies his entire situation, she is in a strategic position to understand and help him. She can interpret the child's home situation to his teacher and his school problems to his

family. Social workers have been instrumental in such things as inducing children to participate more actively in school activities and getting parents to accept vocational plans adapted to their children's capacities. Their familiarity with the social resources of the community and the needs of the children with whom they work enables them to make necessary referrals to other agencies and institutions and to recommend proper placement, when that is necessary, for defective or handicapped children.

Child welfare workers are unusually well situated to help children make proper educational progress. They are chosen for their work because of special ability and training in dealing with children's problems. Relatively small case loads permit them to do far more individual counseling with children and their families than other social workers or teachers can find time for. These advantages are particularly important in the case of those children for whom the group approach of ordinary school work is least suitable—handicapped or exceptional children and children with emotional problems.

Many referrals to child welfare workers come from teachers and other school officials. Children may be referred, for example, because they are markedly retarded in school, present behavior problems, or have unaccountable difficulty with some one subject, such as reading. In many instances child welfare workers are able to help children overcome their difficulties. They may work intensively with the children to help them clear up emotional problems which are retarding them at school or go into their home situations and effect improvements or get children placed elsewhere. In all cases welfare workers attempt to co-operate closely with teachers and the school. They realize that emotional difficulties not only may reveal themselves at school but may be significantly affected by the child's school experiences and his relationships with his teachers. In some instances welfare workers and teachers have jointly worked out programs for helping disturbed children at school.

✕ *Co-operation in attendance work.*—The need for close co-operation between social workers and classroom teachers is clear. In addition, it is highly important that good working arrangements be established between social workers and members of the school staff who do home

visiting—attendance officers, visiting teachers, guidance counselors, and nurses. The co-operation of welfare agencies is particularly necessary in the cases where children's absence from school springs from personal or family difficulties. Ideally each large rural school, or each administrative unit, should have a specially trained visiting teacher, in addition to an attendance officer, to take charge of such cases. Actually, few rural school systems can afford both a visiting teacher and an attendance officer, and attempts to have one person handle the functions of both have in the main been unsuccessful. Most attendance officers have no training or special competence for careful case work. Trained case workers, on the other hand, cannot do the work for which they are best fitted if they are overburdened with routine attendance work and identified as law-enforcement officers.

In a few places, however, visiting teachers are successfully handling both regular attendance enforcement and special-problem truancy cases. To accept responsibility for these two aspects of attendance work, individuals must be unusually well qualified by personality and training. They must have the personal characteristics that make for effectiveness in law enforcement and at the same time have the understanding, sympathy, and insight required for case work. They must be well trained in school administration and school law, on the one hand, and child development and social case work, on the other. In addition, it is essential that their assignments be so adjusted as to leave them time to do intensive case work where it is indicated.

For a time child welfare workers in Alabama handled all attendance work. In the past few years, however, their other duties have become so heavy that there has been a tendency to relieve them of routine cases. In all but a few counties such cases are now handled by the department of education, and only the situations where case work seems advisable are referred to the department of public welfare. While it may not be feasible or desirable in all rural areas to give welfare agencies complete responsibility for attendance cases, it is essential—particularly if the school has no trained case worker on its staff—that their co-operation be secured.

The welfare problem and the school program.—The existence of a

large-scale rural welfare problem has many implications for the rural school program. As an institution which exists to implement the democratic ideal of equality of opportunity, the school has an obligation to do what it can to see that children from underprivileged homes are not hindered in obtaining an education. In formulating its educational program, it must take into account the background, interests, and needs of these children, who in many areas constitute a very considerable proportion of the entire student body. Rural schools themselves are in a sense the underprivileged children of American education and should be particularly sensitive to the plight of those children who are handicapped by poverty in securing an education.

As has been seen, many rural children cannot attend school regularly because they lack even the small sums required to get there, to buy school supplies, and to pay for their lunches. The rural school can make an important contribution toward equalization of educational opportunity through the provision of free transportation, school supplies, and hot lunches. It is important that the rural high school make maximum use of the student work program of the N.Y.A.

The serious social and economic problems of rural areas call for a re-examination of the traditional rural school curriculum. It is evident, for example, that from the earliest appropriate grade level increased consideration should be given to social and economic problems to develop pupils' ability to cope with them. The need for expanded guidance and vocational education programs is clearly indicated. Unless children from poverty-stricken homes are acquainted with a variety of occupational fields and given an opportunity to explore and develop their skills, the chances are great that they will do the same type of work as their parents or something else equally unremunerative. In general, the better vocational opportunities are open only to those with proper educational preparation.

The educational retardation of many underprivileged children has economic roots which have already been considered, but in addition it is a challenge and a reproach to the rural school. If as a group these children are uninterested, retarded, and inclined to drop out of school early, it is in part because the education offered to

them seems of little value. It is the responsibility of the schools to develop programs and teaching methods which will capture the attention and serve the needs of these pupils, as well as those from more prosperous homes.

Broadening community understanding.—In addition to taking cognizance of rural poverty in formulating its own program, the rural school must do what it can to improve community provision for meeting the needs of those in distress. Fortunately, the school can do a great deal. Understanding is as essential as financial ability to the establishment of a satisfactory welfare program.

✕ Particularly in rural areas it is necessary to acquaint people with the extent and urgency of the social needs which exist and the value of an adequate, well-administered, and well-co-ordinated welfare program. It is only within recent years that a large-scale relief problem has emerged in rural America. Many rural people, even some of those in need, have little idea of the extent of poverty which exists. Inured to hardships, they do not always appreciate the necessity and value of adequate assistance to those who are destitute. They have had only brief experience with professional social work and need to be given an understanding of its methods and purposes. Many of the deficiencies of present efforts to relieve rural distress must be blamed not on poverty or callousness but on ignorance.

More widespread awareness of the destitution which exists and the value of welfare work may be expected to influence both the provision local communities make to meet their own needs and the amount of help they obtain from their respective states and the federal government. The administrators of the child welfare program put great stress on community understanding of the program, desire for it, and willingness to participate in deciding upon the areas in which to make the program available.

Inadequacies in rural welfare provision.—Serious deficiencies now exist in rural welfare provision, despite the improvements which have been effected in recent years. Only a beginning has been made in attacking the causes of rural poverty. The destitution of migratory farm laborers, whose situation will be discussed in chapter xvi, has gone almost completely unrelieved. Relatively few of the farm families in distress are being helped by rehabilitation programs to

get back on their own feet. Much urgent need is not being met at all, and in many parts of the country the grants made under various welfare programs are woefully inadequate. As is natural in view of the recent and rapid development of rural welfare programs, the quality of service often leaves much to be desired. In most communities there is need for better co-ordination of existing welfare facilities.

Despite the obvious advantages of helping farm families regain the ability to support themselves as compared with carrying them indefinitely on relief, rehabilitation programs have never been extensive enough to reach more than a fraction of those in need of rehabilitation assistance and in a position to benefit from it. In 1940 four hundred thousand families who were eligible for F.S.A. rehabilitation loans had to be denied them because no money to help them was available. Undoubtedly, many other impoverished families who could have been helped to get back on their feet did not even apply for assistance, knowing that applicants were being turned away. During the 1939-40 fiscal year, although applications for tenant purchase loans were received in only about 1,300 counties, more than 133,000 requests were made for the less than seven thousand loans which could be granted.

Even in the provision of relief, which might be regarded as a minimum social obligation, the most serious deficiencies exist. Particularly in states which have turned over the entire relief burden to local governmental units, large numbers of destitute rural people are denied relief or given only the most meager assistance. In Texas, for example, during the winter of 1939-40 six out of every seven families in need received no public assistance except for surplus commodities. A month's supply of commodities for a family of four had a retail value of about \$3.88—less than one cent per person per meal. Those families who were granted relief were given only about eight dollars a month. In April, 1940, in eight states where local governments had entire responsibility for relief, grants averaged only \$11.77 per family. By contrast, in thirty-one states where local funds were supplemented by the states, grants averaged \$25.43.

It must not be thought that such variations and inadequacies exist only in the provision of relief. In April, 1940, there were still seven states not participating in the federal program of aid to de-

pendent children. In the states which had adopted the program, the number of recipients of aid per one thousand estimated children under sixteen ranged from eight in Virginia to fifty-two in Louisiana. Monthly grants varied from slightly over eight dollars per family in Arkansas to more than sixty dollars per family in Massachusetts.

✓ *Improving the quality of rural welfare service.*—In communities where social needs are being inadequately met rural schools can help to secure more generous welfare appropriations through their educational work with adults and their participation in general welfare and community planning. Through these same means they can acquaint their communities with the methods and values of professional welfare work and thus help to effect improvements in the caliber of welfare service. In rural areas, even more than in cities, community attitudes influence the character of welfare programs and the selection of welfare workers.

Rural communities face some real and some self-imposed handicaps in attracting men and women equal to the responsibilities of modern social work. Lack of resources keeps salary scales below urban levels, and the rapidity with which rural welfare staffs have had to be developed has added to the difficulty of securing well-qualified workers. In addition, in many places rural people have handicapped themselves by failing to recognize the need of professional preparation for welfare work and by favoring local residents, regardless of their training and qualifications, in filling jobs. Both weaknesses are understandable. A few exceptional men and women have succeeded in rural social work without preservice training. Local residents have certain advantages over newcomers—a knowledge of the people and the area and community acceptance. But such advantages, important as they are, are of little value to individuals not prepared for social welfare work by personal qualifications and professional preparation. The schools should exert their influence to have welfare workers chosen on the basis of merit.

✕ *The need for better co-ordination.*—In many communities some of the shortcomings in welfare service are traceable to failure to co-ordinate facilities. The necessity for co-ordination is particularly acute in rural areas where the total available resources are often inadequate to meet the social needs which exist. Wherever co-ordina-

tion is lacking, there are likely to be useless duplication of effort, needless gaps in the provision of services, administrative confusion, and a lack of public understanding of the welfare program. In some counties where there is little "clearing" between welfare agencies it has been found that a few families receive a disproportionate amount of assistance.

The simplest and most widely used method of eliminating duplication of effort among welfare agencies is a social service exchange which maintains a central index of the applicants and grants of all public and private agencies. Laws recently passed in Kansas and Ohio make it mandatory for such an index to be established in every county. In many rural counties which do not have regularly constituted exchanges, a confidential index has been established in the office of the county welfare department for the benefit of those agencies which wish to consult it.

A number of means have been developed to improve co-operation among agencies and at the same time increase public understanding of welfare work. In a few small communities lay people have been invited to participate in conferences on cases of unusual difficulty or community interest. Elsewhere permanent citizens' advisory councils have been established in connection with particular programs, such as child welfare. In some rural areas, notably in North Dakota and Indiana, community- or county-wide councils have been organized to consider the whole welfare problem. In still other places welfare is one of the fields of attention of planning organizations interested in general community improvement. The work of such councils will be discussed in greater detail in chapter xv. In many places they have led not only to better co-ordination of existing facilities but to the establishment of new services and to community-wide attacks on such specific problems as recreation, tavern control, and medical care.

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CHAPTER XII

OLDER RURAL YOUTH

DURING the early 1940's the total number of persons aged sixteen to twenty-four will be greater than ever before and greater than it will ever be again in the calculable future. Bruce L. Melvin has estimated that the peak of about 21,900,000 will be reached in 1944. In 1940, according to census data, there were nearly 21,500,000 youth in America in the sixteen-to-twenty-four-year age span. Forty-four per cent of them—approximately 9,500,000 young men and women—lived in rural areas.

For decades prior to 1930 there was a constant and heavy flow of youth from farms and villages to cities, so that between 1910 and 1930 the total farm population declined by nearly two millions, despite a healthy rate of natural increase. During the booming 1920's the net migration of young people away from farms was more than two million.

Suddenly the economic depression brought unemployment to reduce the trek to cities and to send unprecedented numbers of city-dwellers back to the land. The net migration of youth from country to city between 1930 and 1935 is estimated at not more than two hundred thousand, leaving at least a million "dammed up" on farms who would have gone to cities had the migration flow continued as in the twenties. This does not include other hundreds of thousands who remained stranded among the rural-nonfarm population.

THE SITUATION OF OLDER RURAL YOUTH

Despite the effects of intermittent improvement in business activity during the late thirties and the national defense activity of the early forties, the cities are still not absorbing sufficient numbers of rural youth. The mechanization of agriculture goes on, reducing the amount of man power needed to produce food and fiber for the nation. Not only is farmownership more difficult of attainment than in any previous period, because of the large capital requirements of

modern mechanized farming, the disappearance of the frontier of free agricultural land, and numerous other factors, but the number of paid agricultural laborers is decreasing, demonstrating diminishing chances for youth to become even wage-earners on the farm. During recent decades employment in many important rural industries, such as mining, has also declined, largely because of the depletion of natural resources and the introduction of labor-saving machinery. In some sections of the country extractive industries which once absorbed large numbers of rural people have virtually disappeared, as the desolate cutover areas of the Northwest and the abandoned coal villages of the Appalachians bear witness.

The problem of surplus farm youth.—Even if the number of opportunities in agriculture were not diminishing, there would still be a large “surplus” of farm youth. The number of farm youth annually reaching the age of eighteen at present is about 640,000, while only about 290,000 adult farm people annually reach the age of sixty-five or die before reaching that age. Thus each year about 350,000 more farm youth mature than are needed in agriculture, even assuming a static replacement demand. The size of this annual surplus is likely to decline slightly during the coming decade but not enough to make any significant difference. Estimates of the prospective cumulative surplus of the present decade, without counting any piling-up from former years, vary from about three million upward. Roughly 50 per cent of these surplus youth are girls. Experience and current trends indicate that nearly half of the girls will seek employment, at least for a considerable period before their marriage. Thus the addition to the nonagricultural labor force from farm youth will probably be above two million during the present decade.

The problem of transfer to nonfarm adjustment for these youth is complicated by the fact that most of them are growing up under conditions of severe poverty in geographic areas remote from the great centers of industrial employment. The majority of them are in the Cotton Belt and in the southern highlands, and smaller numbers are in the northern cutover lands, the Great Plains drought areas, and other parts of the country. Quite largely they are in families presently or recently dependent upon public assistance. About one million rural youth aged sixteen to twenty-four were members of such families in October, 1935.

Even for the surplus youth in the more fortunate families in good land areas where the comparatively prosperous diversified family farm is common, the dangers resulting from unemployment and clouded outlook bode ill for individual and national welfare. Work habits and earning potentialities develop with use and atrophy with disuse. Prolonged anxiety and repeated disappointments tend to produce permanently lethargic personalities. The loss to the American culture of the future and the economic and military consequences of neglecting rural youth may be incalculable.

The current defense emergency has heightened somewhat the public recognition of these dangers, and special efforts are under way to make current programs of vocational training for defense industries accessible to rural youth. The special classes financed by congressional appropriations made during 1940, aggregating some forty million dollars, are for the most part being held in the public schools of cities and the larger towns and are consequently accessible to only a small number of rural young people. But ten million dollars was also appropriated in the autumn of 1940 for expenditure during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1941, for a special program to make similar training available in rural localities for out-of-school rural youth, and by the end of the first quarter of 1941 some seven thousand classes, enrolling an average of about fifteen rural boys, were reported in operation. Unfortunately, instruction in home nursing and care of the sick, of special value to rural girls, though originally contemplated, was not included in this program. Substantial numbers of rural girls benefit, however, from another 1940 appropriation of \$7,500,000 to the United States Office of Education to finance vocational training in appropriate public schools for young persons employed on National Youth Administration work projects. Money has since been appropriated to continue these special vocational programs during the 1941-42 fiscal year.

The public consciousness of the problems of youth, which has been growing for more than a decade, was at first productive of much pessimism. There is, however, an increasing recognition that the startling gap which has developed between the time of leaving the traditional school and making an adjustment in satisfying full-time employment can be bridged in ways productive of individual and national strength. Rather than a cause solely of confusion and de-

spair, the lengthened period of nurture for youth can be utilized as an opportunity to develop more meaningful general education, better vocational preparation, and altogether a gradual and better-integrated induction of youth into exercise of the responsibilities of adult citizenship in a great democratic nation.

FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT-EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES

SERVING RURAL YOUTH

In view of the present economic and educational status of older youth, the most urgent requirement is that opportunities be made to enable them to combine working, earning, and learning. Striking and highly significant ways of integrating productive labor and earning with education and training are now taking form. In keeping with the facts of twentieth-century national economic organization, the federal government is participating in a program to provide youth with earning-learning opportunities. This program operates through several agencies, all of which necessarily co-operate in various ways and to varying degrees with the state governments and with local public and private organizations, adult citizens, and youth. In particular, the National Youth Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps have pioneered in developing new means of serving youth. We shall look at their programs, with our attention focused on the opportunities they provide for older rural youth.

The National Youth Administration.—In June, 1935, by executive order President Roosevelt created the National Youth Administration to embrace the student-aid program formerly operated as a part of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and a program of work projects for out-of-school needy young people. Annual appropriations for the support of this agency have been made by Congress, and it has blazed trails in providing combinations of work, guidance, and training for youth. Its achievements in this area, and those of its sister-agency, the Civilian Conservation Corps, have had profound effects upon the prevailing educational philosophy, tending to cause educators at the secondary and higher levels to recognize anew the importance of work experience as a part of a good education as well as preparation for vocational competency.

The N.Y.A. also operates to promote equality of educational op-

portunity by enabling many young persons to surmount the barrier of low family income which would otherwise bar them from further schooling and by enabling many others to escape the handicap of unemployment which would prevent them from gaining work experience or practical training.

Older rural youth have always had a part in the student work program, in which the N.Y.A. pays selected students for useful work assigned to them by their respective school or college authorities, thereby enabling them to earn modest sums without which they would be unable to continue their schooling. With respect to its work projects for out-of-school youth, however, the N.Y.A. was at first justifiably criticized because the youth benefited were very largely residents of cities and towns and because few projects were set up within the reach of farm and village youth.

Late in 1936 the N.Y.A. began to experiment with "resident training centers," primarily for the benefit of farm youth. Chiefly located at agricultural schools, the early centers gave students from farms opportunities to do their own housekeeping and earn small sums, thus making it possible for them to take "short courses" in agriculture or homemaking. Subsequently, resident training centers were put into operation in a greater variety of places and for more varied purposes, though they are still designed chiefly to make available the benefits of combined work and training to needy rural youth. By 1941 there were more than six hundred centers in operation, with some forty thousand young people enrolled at a given time.

After the onset of the defense emergency in 1940 there came a marked tendency to slant the N.Y.A. work and training toward preparation for defense industries. However, some of the resident centers have kept their emphasis exclusively upon agriculture and homemaking and continue to serve rural youth who look forward to agricultural life. The centers which are devoted wholly to mechanical work and training related to defense industries are chiefly for that equally large group of rural youth who must eventually find careers in nonagricultural pursuits.

A typical resident training center.—A current example of an N.Y.A. resident center serving rural youth is operated in the plant of the defunct Hartwick Seminary, near Cooperstown, New York. The

center also includes an adjoining farm of 135 acres. Its aim is to prepare rural young men who are not high-school graduates for skilled agricultural work and rural young women for rural occupations in the field of homemaking, chiefly as household assistants. Work units for young men include (1) farm management, (2) dairy industry, (3) poultry and vegetable crops, and (4) farm mechanics. All work projects are accompanied by practical related instruction supervised by the Agricultural Education Bureau of the state education department. This bureau and the Extension Division of Cornell University are joint local sponsors of the center.

During the enrolment term of one year young men obtain experience in several or all of the four work units as well as instruction in general agriculture. The minimum enrolment period for girls is six months. During this period girls obtain work experience and instruction in (1) food preparation and service, (2) sewing and textiles, and (3) household management.

The young men and young women participate jointly in a comprehensive program of civic, social, and recreational activities. The program is very largely planned by the youth themselves, and they have constructed or rehabilitated many of the facilities needed for it. Social and recreational activities are also conducted in co-operation with the youth and adults of the surrounding community. Experience in co-operative group living is one of the most valuable phases of the program of this resident training center.

Although resident training centers have enabled the N.Y.A. to serve increasing numbers of rural youth, it has not yet succeeded in extending the benefits of its programs to rural youth on a fully equitable basis as compared with the opportunities it offers urban youth. In recent years enrolment in the N.Y.A. student work program has ranged between 250,000 and upward of 400,000, and from 150,000 to approximately 300,000 have been enrolled in N.Y.A. projects for out-of-school youth. Well under half of the young people reached have been rural. The agency is making sincere efforts, however, to extend and improve its service to rural youth.

The Civilian Conservation Corps.—The well-known Civilian Conservation Corps was established in 1933 to provide for the conservation of natural resources and to furnish employment to unemployed young men in relief families. During its eight years of existence its

enrolment has generally consisted of about three hundred thousand men enrolled for periods of six months or longer, of whom about one-tenth are veterans of World War I, the others being young men, most of them from relief families, who are single and in need of work. Negroes are represented in approximate proportion to their numbers in the population.

Nearly 60 per cent of the enrollees are rural youth. Thus the C.C.C. is an agency of considerable importance for the youth of rural America. It maintains some 1,350 camps with about two hundred enrollees in each camp. Many of the camps are in public parks or forests, and enrollees are typically assigned work in connection with projects of public construction, fire prevention, reforestation, and flood control. Some C.C.C. camps are devoted exclusively to erosion control and other forms of soil conservation. Thus the work done at C.C.C. camps may have high educational value for farm boys. All the camps have considerable motor equipment, and a limited number of enrollees get valuable experience in the operation and repair of trucks and tractors.

Soon after the Corps was established, special provision was made for more formal schooling at C.C.C. camps. An educational adviser selected by the United States Office of Education was employed in each camp to obtain the co-operation of the military and technical personnel of the camp in the organization of a program of instruction. At first such programs were carried on under great handicaps, including lack of housing space, poor lighting, and absence of instructional equipment. Gradually these obstacles are being overcome and now almost every camp has a special building containing classrooms and shops for instructional purposes, adequately lighted and otherwise equipped.

The educational program is on an ostensibly voluntary basis, and instruction in classes is given only after the regular eight-hour working day is over. Some investigators have asserted that in fact there is a good deal of compulsion upon enrollees to sign up for classes. The same investigators have urged that class work should be more closely integrated with the manual work performed by enrollees in the field and that the eight-hour work requirement should be relaxed to leave more time for education and training.

It has also been recommended that the initial selection of enrol-

lees, now made by local welfare agencies, should be made by public employment offices and that a system should be developed whereby new enrollees could be assigned to camps where they would receive the particular types of work and education for which they are best fitted. These suggestions indicate that there is much room for improvement in the administration of the C.C.C. as an agency to provide employment and education for rural youth. It has, however, helped to fill a pressing and important need; its past and prospective accomplishments in conserving human and material resources are very great.

COMMUNITY PLANNING FOR THE NEEDS OF RURAL YOUTH

The best federal, state, or co-operative programs will meet with only limited success if they encounter local apathy, defeatism, dissension, or hostility. On the other hand, communities which surmount petty local antagonisms and factionalism and plan co-operatively to meet their social needs can do a great deal to solve their own problems by wise use of latent local leadership and resources, whether aid from larger units of government be much or little.

The first step—a survey.—Strange though it may seem, there are few communities where anyone pretends to know the size of the youth population. Usually no one person knows whether there are more girls than boys in the community, how many are working at what jobs for what wages and hours, and how many are out of school and unemployed.

Much less does anyone know about the health, educational, and recreational wants and needs of the community's young people. How many need dental attention? The records of the local Selective Service board will give a slight indication. How many are in danger of tuberculosis? How many have a venereal disease? How many definitely want further schooling but lack the modest necessary financial resources? How do the out-of-school boys and girls spend their spare time? Only by searching for the answers to such questions as these can one ascertain outstanding community needs.

Are there in the area enough high-school graduates who want further education but are financially unable to leave home and go to college to justify the establishment of a local public junior college?

If not, are there enough to justify a request for the operation of a local extension class by the state university or the land-grant college? Do the social and recreational needs of the out-of-school youth and young adults of the community cry out for the construction or rehabilitation of a building to be used as a community youth center?

Answers to many of these questions are available, at least in part, in the local schools, at the local courthouse, and at various other local repositories of public records. Others can be found only by questioning the community's young people face to face. A survey of youth can use both methods, either for different phases of the investigation or for the same phases, in which case the data from the different sources afford a reciprocal check for accuracy.

The important thing is to find the facts, discover what outstanding needs they point to, and then focus community attention on those needs. If a survey is accurate, it need not be too comprehensive or too elaborate. Many valuable surveys have been made in recent years with the co-operation of the Agricultural Extension Service, the United States Office of Education, and other federal and state agencies. Almost everywhere university and college departments of sociology and of education stand ready to give advice and consultation. A bulletin telling how to conduct various types of surveys is available from the American Youth Commission, which has itself executed several surveys of youth.

Many types of programs are possible.—After the facts are known, possibilities in program planning are varied indeed. The community can concentrate at first upon ways and means of promoting the occupational adjustment of youth, upon the improvement of educational opportunities, or upon any one of a number of other undertakings, narrow or broad in scope. Wisconsin communities prepare for and conduct a "Citizenship Induction Day" for native new voters which achieves much toward making the young people conscious of their privileges and responsibilities and toward making the community aware of their needs and what they have to offer. First used at Manitowoc, this program has become state-wide and is spreading to other states.

North Carolina communities, well typified by the town of North Wilkesboro, conduct discussion groups on the problems of courtship

and marriage. In Ross County, Ohio, a survey of the needs of rural youth was sponsored by the Land Use Planning Committee and executed largely by the youth themselves, with the co-operation of national, state, and local agencies. As a result of this survey a series of community plans for rural youth is being developed. Ross County is one of a group of communities in several states where the American Youth Commission provides advisory service in the planning of local youth programs.

PROGRAMS TO IMPROVE THE ECONOMIC SITUATION OF RURAL YOUTH

Many youth surveys will point to the economic predicament of the community's young people as the situation most urgently requiring consideration. Making a satisfactory occupational adjustment—securing competent guidance, necessary vocational preparation, and a fair start in farming or a foothold in some nonagricultural occupation—is the most basic and difficult problem confronting the vast majority of rural youth. In many places community youth councils, particular agencies, or informal groups have recognized the necessity of providing programs which will facilitate the occupational adjustment of youth and keep it from being the hit-or-miss, wasteful, discouraging process it now so often is. Because most of the programs are newly launched, tentative, and handicapped by the limited resources of their sponsors, concrete accomplishments thus far have not been great. However, these early community efforts have laid the groundwork for more ambitious and effective programs and have given adults and youth alike a better understanding of the economic situation of today's young people. It is encouraging to note that the number of programs concerned with some phase of occupational adjustment is multiplying rapidly. The efforts witnessed so far may be only the preliminary stirrings of a substantial and widespread effort on the part of American communities to improve the economic situation of their youth.

Vocational education, guidance, and placement are the three essential elements of a well-rounded occupational adjustment program. As was brought out in chapters v and vi, few rural schools are offering adequate vocational training opportunities and guidance

and placement services to their own students, to say nothing of out-of-school youth; and relatively few of the minority of public employment offices which have special facilities for meeting the needs of young people are so situated and staffed that they can serve rural youth. However, the number of schools which recognize their obligation to out-of-school youth is rapidly growing. Even among the schools which do not have well-organized guidance programs there are increasing signs of concern for unemployed or underemployed young people. In a number of places school superintendents, principals, and teachers are doing what they can to get such youth placed or to help them find temporary money-making opportunities. A number of school systems, in widely scattered parts of the country, are planning to employ an extra person, on either a full- or part-time basis, to devote himself to this work. In addition to attempting to place youth, these schools hope to guide them to get necessary vocational training and to provide such training themselves when it is feasible and desirable.

In Colorado and a few other places schools are experimenting with work-education programs for out-of-school youth similar to the diversified occupations program for students described in chapters v and vi. Efforts are made to place out-of-school youth on a part-time training basis in a field of their choice and to provide study opportunities closely related to their occupational interest. A promising attempt is also under way in the western states to develop satisfactory arrangements for training apprentices in small communities.

Community efforts to help youth get established.—Even in places where the schools and public employment offices are providing guidance and placement services for out-of-school youth it is important that they have the co-operation of the community and the youth themselves. Where those agencies are not active, it is obviously essential that the community establish some other machinery for helping youth to make a satisfactory occupational adjustment.

Ideally, the schools, other agencies, and representative community leaders should pool their efforts to develop a comprehensive program which meets the needs of in-school and out-of-school youth. An example of just such a program comes from a rural county with a county seat of some six thousand people, Fredonia, New York.

When the secretary of the local Y.M.C.A. began to give vocational talks at high-school assemblies, he noticed that most of the rural schools were not paying much attention to vocational guidance and placement. He was instrumental in organizing a county committee on guidance, composed of the school superintendent, the principals of rural and city high schools, the vocational teachers, a normal-school executive, and the proprietors of a local wholesale business, a retail store, and a hotel.

Many of the committee's activities benefit students and out-of-school youth alike. Two guidance clinics it sponsored attracted a thousand young men and women who had group sessions and in many cases personal interviews with carefully chosen representatives of some thirty different occupations offering employment opportunities in the area. Other committee activities include radio broadcasts on vocational subjects, in the preparation of which youth participate; a question-and-answer column in the weekly papers of the county on the vocational problems of young people; and organized tours to factories and other places of occupational interest.

In North Carolina there are now more than ten community committees and a state co-ordinating committee engaged in the task of accelerating employment among youth. In a number of rural communities where the schools make no attempt to help older youth the Kiwanis Club, similar organizations, or informal groups of prominent business and professional men have organized counseling services. Aware of their limitations as counselors, in many places the members of such groups have arranged to get training and consultation help from the nearest public employment office. Here and there rural communities have also undertaken surveys to uncover employment opportunities. Not infrequently out-of-school youth have themselves participated in making such surveys.

In such surveys opportunities in agriculture are not neglected. A growing number of agencies are interesting themselves in helping promising youth and young married couples to get established in farming. In many parts of the country county agricultural agents and vocational agriculture teachers are sponsoring father-and-son agreements which provide youth with well-defined opportunities to become partners on their family farms. In some places county agents

and agriculture teachers are also recommending reliable young persons to the Farm Credit Administration and other lending agencies for the loans they need to get established in farming and are then guiding them in their early agricultural operations. The success of the F.S.A.'s rehabilitation loan program, which also couples credit and guidance, suggests the possibilities of this sort of effort. In co-operation with teachers of vocational agriculture and the federal land banks, the Farm Credit Administration is conducting an experiment under which a number of promising vocational agriculture students may rent—and, it is hoped, ultimately purchase—farms which have come into the hands of the United States government.

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS FOR OLDER RURAL YOUTH

Rural youth need educational opportunities not only so that they can take their rightful place in the nation's economy but, equally important, so that they can find the fullest amount of satisfaction in personal and family life and fulfil their civic responsibilities whether they move to the city or remain in the country. In fact, however, older rural youth are out of school in larger proportion than their urban contemporaries. Moreover, on account of the deficiencies in rural library service and many other handicaps inherent in sparsity of population, opportunities for informal education are generally not so ample in farm and village life as they are in cities. New educational agencies and new techniques adapted to the needs and situation of rural youth are urgently needed. However, there are a number of existing agencies which are making a special effort to meet the educational needs of rural youth.

At the level of higher education.—Most prominent among such agencies on the level of higher education are the land-grant colleges, a great chain of institutions in whose original conception and founding the needs of rural people were prominently in mind. These institutions today receive substantial federal appropriations for specified educational activities, many of which are related to agriculture and homemaking. In all there are sixty-nine land-grant colleges and universities. Seventeen of these institutions are devoted to the education of Negroes and have certain distinct characteristics. The

remaining land-grant colleges differ somewhat from one another, but in general provide three types of educational service: (1) resident instruction, with emphasis on instruction and research in agriculture, home economics, engineering, and their underlying sciences; (2) experiment-station research, originally concerned almost exclusively with the productive phases of farming but now also devoted to agricultural marketing problems, rural sociology, and home economics; and (3) extension work in agriculture, home economics, and rural community life. As is apparent, the land-grant colleges are oriented to serve the rural population.

The extension service of the land-grant colleges will be described in chapter xiii. Their programs of resident instruction have been gradually broadened to meet the needs of students, and many institutions now offer courses in teacher education, forestry, veterinary medicine, and commerce and business, as well as in agriculture, home economics, and engineering. At most institutions instruction has also been extended upward into a number of graduate fields. In 1935-36, 17 per cent of the more than one million students enrolled in degree-granting institutions in the United States were attending land-grant colleges and universities. Twenty-one per cent of all graduate students were enrolled in land-grant institutions. A substantial proportion of these students came from rural communities.

The survey of the land-grant colleges made for the Advisory Committee on Education found that many aspects of their program and administration required improvement. Complex problems remain to be solved with regard to the division of authority between the states and the federal government in the control of these institutions and with regard to the relationship of the land-grant colleges to other institutions of higher education in their respective states. The resident instruction programs of the land-grant colleges are still not sufficiently broad. Most of the institutions have underestimated "the importance of a more ample background of general education than is furnished by the high school alone" and overemphasized the productive aspects of agriculture while devoting too little attention to developing skill in business management, economic insight, and co-operative attitudes. While pointing out these shortcomings, the survey reported unequivocally that "the United

States has the most effective program of education in the technical fields represented by agriculture, engineering, and home economics to be found in any country."

The folk-school idea.—Peter Manniche, in describing the famous Danish folk high schools, says:

Students and teachers work, eat, and talk together. The ideal high school teacher is the first among equals, a man who has something to say, not just has to say something at definite hours of the day. He is neither a *Führer* who can give the whole truth or the whole system, nor a co-partner in a debating club. . . .

Grundtvig's idea was to educate the common people—farmers and artisans—toward democracy. He wanted individuals with social responsibility, not mass men. . . . The primary aim has always been to create better men and women. That the students also became better farmers and artisans and better cooperators was a by-product of their activity.

The folk school as developed in Denmark offers a relatively informal and brief period of instruction each year and may be attended one or more years. It is intended primarily for persons aged eighteen to twenty-five.

Under the guidance of their parents they have then learned the work on the farm. Their minds have matured. Their erotic and religious life has awakened their feeling for poetry, their sense of social responsibility. They are full of questions.

The task of the folk school is to help them get answers to their questions, chiefly through the teaching of history, literature, and sociology in a homely way and through the development of fellowship.

In America the folk-school idea has taken root in a number of places and in a variety of adaptations. As we shall see, it has influenced the new-type "short courses" offered by state agricultural colleges in the Northwest. In the southern Appalachian region it also crops up. Berea College in Kentucky, which represents one type of institution affected by the folk-school idea, has by providing work opportunities for all its students made education of a highly practical character available to the mountain youth of the area. Smaller, more recent, and different in type is the John C. Campbell Folk School at Brasstown, North Carolina. It is located on a three-hundred-acre farm, on which there have been built classrooms and a

home for about thirty young people. Both sexes work and study together during a regular winter term of about four months. Throughout the year the school serves as a community center, and in summer the teacher of carving travels through the countryside and holds informal classes, often out-of-doors.

Resident students at the school do all the work of the farm and household. They get both instruction and actual experience in agriculture, soil conservation, simple construction, and home economics. They provide their own amusements, of which folk games and community singing form an important part. As a consequence of this stimulus, each year a folk festival is presented for the surrounding community. In June of each year, too, the school gives a special ten-day short course, during which workers from the open country and from the near-by mining and cotton-mill districts join in living, working, and playing together. In this way the influence of the school is extended to the community as a whole and to the surrounding areas.

The John C. Campbell Folk School receives no public funds but is nearly self-supporting, although the costs of attending the four-month term are kept so low that they can usually be worked out during the term. When they cannot be, students are usually allowed to work them out by some additional labor at the school. Begun in 1926, this folk school is still small but succeeds in integrating itself so closely with the community that it is referred to as "a rural center rather than a school proper." It may well be that the Campbell School and the handful of other folk schools now in existence will prove so successful that they will lead to the establishment of many additional schools of similar type in rural communities throughout America.

"Short courses" for farm young people.—The "agricultural short course" is an institution of considerable age in the United States, having long been a feature of many of the land-grant colleges. A much-needed clarification of terminology is furnished by E. L. Kirkpatrick's definition: "the period of instruction ranging from four to twenty-four weeks on a one or two year basis, which is offered to those not regularly enrolled in school." This distinguishes it, on the one hand, from the shorter "institute" or "Farmers' Week"

type of offering, lasting only a few days, and, on the other hand, from the nondegree course of two or three full academic years, which is also available at a few agricultural colleges.

The number of institutions offering short courses was forty-six in 1923 but declined to twenty-eight in 1938. Reasons for the decline include the broadening of agricultural extension work so that practically equivalent instruction is obtainable from the county agent and his staff, the expansion of vocational agriculture departments in the high schools, and the lack of available dormitory facilities and instructional staffs at many colleges. The courses which are still offered have in some cases been completely reorganized and are thought to be serving a real need.

The early short courses were in general agriculture, but a tendency developed for courses to specialize upon the mechanical aspects of specific kinds of farming and related industries. Concomitantly, the period of instruction was shortened to a point where courses became mere institutes or conferences at some colleges. More recently, the early exclusive emphasis upon productive efficiency in farming has been broadened at some institutions to embrace cultural aspects of rural living, and many of today's short courses partake of the character of the folk school which has had so profound an influence upon the rural peoples of Scandinavia.

An outstanding example of this new and promising type of short course is the one offered at the University of Wisconsin, which strives to educate out-of-school young men for both farming and rural leadership.

The challenge is to equip them adequately for new economic and social situations, as well as the technical problems affecting agriculture, to provide an education that will stimulate thinking about and give a better understanding of distribution, markets, and actual participation in group organization.

The course includes two winter sessions of fifteen weeks each. In addition to instruction designed to make the students more proficient farmers, courses are offered in such subjects as the co-operative movement, community music, parliamentary practice, personal and social development, rural society, American history, regional literature, and farm legal and business practice. Three evenings each week

are set aside for forums where problems ranging from insurance to international relations are discussed. Enrolment of 375 students in 1938-39 provides one bit of evidence of the vitality of the program.

Short courses now being offered by the agricultural colleges in Minnesota and North Dakota have a similar folk-school emphasis. E. L. Kirkpatrick feels that short courses represent an unexcelled opportunity for preparing young men to secure maximum satisfaction from operating a farm and living in the country and for helping them to develop their leadership potentialities. Short courses should also be developed, he feels, for rural young women, largely built around homemaking but also covering means of using leisure time for money-making or increased personal satisfaction.

Local public junior colleges.—Early in the depression of the 1930's most of the twenty-eight thousand high schools in the nation found some of their own recent graduates clamoring at their doors for further schooling. No jobs were available, and few of the youth had the financial resources necessary to leave the home community and attend college, even though they had planned to do so. This situation served to emphasize the widespread need for local junior colleges which would add a two-year extension to the four-year high school and enable thousands of young people to get a complete secondary education without leaving their homes.

Besides carrying general education through the secondary period, the junior college is the logical institution to provide vocational or technical training for many skilled occupations and semiprofessions. The United States Office of Education has noted that junior colleges in industrial centers are already offering preparation for such varied pursuits as those of wireless operators, cost accountants, advertising solicitors, news reporters, policemen, detectives, secretaries, electrical assistants, photographers, statisticians, bank clerks, realtors, surveyors, watchmakers, and department-store supervisors. Usually they concentrate upon the types of vocational training for which there is likely to be a strong local demand. Rural youth, too, should have better opportunities to prepare themselves for the occupations represented in their own labor market. They suffer grave handicaps when they must move great distances to seek work and apply for jobs for which they are completely unprepared.

Few rural school administrative units are now large enough to support a junior college. Ultimately such units may grow to the point where most can efficiently operate their own junior college and offer an integrated fourteen-year educational program, with each level well articulated with the next and with no invidious distinctions made between town and country youth. Meanwhile, junior colleges will have to be established on a regional basis by the joint action of a number of neighboring administrative units or by the states. In sparsely settled states the co-operation of administrative units in an area encompassing a number of counties may be required. In more thickly settled parts of the country, notably in the Middle West, it may be possible for a single county to support a junior college if all its administrative units, including the one which embraces the county-seat town, co-operate.

There are already 610 junior colleges in the United States, of which 261 are public institutions. These latter enrol about 170,000 students, more than two-thirds of the total number in junior colleges of all types. In California some 40 public junior colleges are so distributed over the state as to be almost within commuting distance of the home of any prospective student. Iowa, Oklahoma, Texas, Kansas, and Minnesota also have numerous local public junior colleges. There is now under way an extensive, well-conceived study of terminal education in junior colleges which may be expected not only to contribute to the development of more satisfactory curriculums in existing institutions but also to increase public awareness of the value of junior colleges and hasten the establishment of new ones. It is not unlikely that in our generation the junior-college movement will spread rapidly over the entire nation—a prospect rich in promise for older youth, both rural and urban.

Part-time vocational education for out-of-school youth.—For several years there has been under way the development of part-time instruction in vocational agriculture and home economics for out-of-school youth. This trend is an offshoot of the federally aided vocational education program now functioning in some 7,600 high schools. In the South programs of part-time instruction in vocational agriculture were initiated separately for white and Negro youth and at first developed more rapidly than in other regions. By

1938, however, it was reported that every state had at least some local part-time programs operating, and it was estimated that a total of about fifty thousand farm boys and young men were enrolled.

Some of the part-time courses are of the short, intensive type, with the group meeting once or twice a week during the winter months only; others are of the long, intermittent type, with monthly or bimonthly meetings throughout the year; a combination of both works well in many places. Attendance is, of course, voluntary; and the instruction centers about the expressed preferences of the group. Sometimes courses are almost completely devoted to farm engineering or farm shop; elsewhere they may emphasize various phases of farm management, including recording and accounting, agricultural economics, livestock production methods, or crop and soil management. Occasionally some attention is given to rural community life.

The instruction is always informal and is sometimes conducted as a forum. Each meeting is from two to three hours in duration, with part of the time devoted to recreation. The leisure activities take many forms, such as athletics suitable to the season, joint social programs with similar organizations of girls, appropriate holiday celebrations, and an annual banquet. Occasionally, too, the members of a part-time class co-operate in a business way by forming a breeders' association, operating a fruit-spray "ring," or engaging in co-operative buying and selling.

The following objectives of the part-time vocational agriculture program, although adapted from a statement prepared by one mid-western teacher, have nation-wide applicability. The program attempts (1) to develop confidence of the older farm youth in himself, (2) to help him get established in farming, (3) to help him earn some money immediately, (4) to provide him with a spare-time activity, (5) to develop an appreciation for good recreation, and (6) to decrease farm tenancy.

Analogous part-time instruction in home economics is also carried on and was reported to be reaching some sixty-five thousand girls and women in 1938-39, but some of these were nonrural and some were of mature adult age. Some of the subject matter in vocational agriculture and home economics is suitable for both sexes, and there is a growing tendency toward occasional interchange of teachers be-

tween study groups in the two subjects and toward occasional joint meetings for both instructional and recreational purposes. In view of the well-recognized need of rural young men and women for companionship and more adequate preparation for marriage and family living, these developments, which tend to stimulate mutual understanding, appear highly desirable.

Opportunities to prepare for nonagricultural occupations.—In the aggregate, the various educational agencies which have been discussed reach only a small proportion of all older rural youth. However, those young people who intend to remain in the country as farmers or homemakers are relatively well served as compared with youth who must prepare themselves for some nonagricultural vocation. There is some likelihood that the high school in their local community will provide part-time courses in vocational agriculture and home economics, and each year a few thousand fortunate rural youth attend short courses and folk schools. The large numbers of youth who wish to prepare for nonagricultural employment—and it must be remembered that no more than half of all maturing farm youth may hope to be absorbed in agriculture—may have to go farther afield to obtain the vocational training they need. As was brought out in chapter vi, trade and industrial education is beyond the means of most rural high schools. Relatively few rural youth live near junior colleges which provide vocational programs.

Fortunately, as was indicated in earlier sections of the chapter, the federal government is now helping to provide nonagricultural vocational training for rural youth both through the N.Y.A. and through the more recently launched program to train workers for defense industries. In addition, here and there throughout the country a few institutions are offering trade and industrial training for rural young people. A number of the land-grant colleges, for example, give short courses in occupations related to farming. The State College of Washington provides an intensive four-week course in gas engines and tractors. Oregon State has a similar course in which attention is given to all kinds of machines, including the Diesel engine. In addition, it offers young people of high-school age or above a two-week cannery course and a two-week dairy course. Finally, a number of regional schools, of which perhaps the best known is the North

Dakota State School of Science at Wahpeton, provide trade and industrial training for older youth. At Wahpeton courses are offered in numerous types of automobile work, air conditioning, aviation, electrical work, drafting, printing, radio repair and service, sheet-metal work, commerce, and numerous other fields. For girls, courses are provided in dressmaking and homemaking. Each year Wahpeton attracts approximately seven hundred students, roughly 90 per cent of whom are high-school graduates. Young people from every corner of North Dakota go to Wahpeton for vocational training.

New York is developing a program which distributes throughout the state opportunities for similar types of training. Four of the six state schools of agriculture now offer courses designed to help rural youth prepare for nonagricultural employment. Two offer instruction in electricity; another gives training in the processing of farm products and the manufacturing of industrial goods; the fourth offers a variety of courses covering such diverse fields as watchmaking and clock repair, automobile repair, garage operation, forestry, and various phases of construction work. All four schools offer a two-year course in home economics, designed to prepare rural girls for employment as managers or cooks in clubs, tearooms, and restaurants.

Any solution of the problem of surplus rural youth must include provision for vocational training in fields other than farming so that migrating youth will not be handicapped in making a satisfactory occupational adjustment and so that the nation may secure the benefit of developing their ability and skill. Present efforts to provide such training should be regarded as experiments rather than accepted as the ultimate solution to the problem. Out of the experience of the many institutions now offering training, the imaginative attempts of depression-born federal agencies to meet the needs of older youth, the current defense training program, and the findings of such studies as the one now in progress on terminal education in junior colleges may come a number of satisfactory patterns for making nonagricultural vocational training available to rural youth.

Work opportunities to keep rural youth in school.—The provision of scholarships or work-and-earning opportunities which enable competent students to continue in school or college when otherwise they would have to drop out for financial reasons is also essential if the capacities of some of the most promising rural young people are not

to be wasted. Such opportunities are now being made available on a limited scale by many colleges and universities, by some community civic clubs, by some states maintaining scholarship systems, and by the National Youth Administration student work program. Through contributions from their own pockets Farm Security Administration workers in Mississippi have built up a revolving loan fund for worthy youth from F.S.A. households who wish to borrow money to attend college. The W. K. Kellogg Foundation annually provides scholarships for an eight-week short course at Michigan State College for more than one hundred of Michigan's young people.

Rural communities benefit themselves when they underwrite scholarships for needy young men and women with leadership potentialities. Given the opportunity, such young people can invigorate rural community life and perform many specific services which are needed and valuable. It is to the community's own interest to attempt to hold these youth and to develop their skill and ability. Fortunately, youth can be trained at relatively little cost to manage co-operatives, direct many types of recreational activities, and perform numerous other services. It is within the means of most rural organizations to prepare youth for such responsibilities by providing scholarships to short courses, folk schools, and recreation training institutes; and few philanthropic opportunities have more to recommend them.

Rural communities do not generally have the means to finance scholarships for the professions requiring long and expensive training, such as medicine, library work, teaching, social work, and recreation administration. In view of the great need of rural communities for the services which persons trained in these fields can provide, it may well be urged that the N.Y.A. should undertake, on an experimental basis and on a small scale at first, the provision of a few relatively expensive student work opportunities for gifted rural persons pledged to render needed professional services in these and similar fields in rural areas.

ENCOURAGING CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF LEISURE TIME

Of young men from the open country interviewed in the course of a survey of young people in Maryland, conducted by the American Youth Commission, one out of every five reported that his principal

leisure-time activity was loafing. In reporting on this survey of young people, Howard M. Bell writes:

Even if the activities of the schools were so expanded and so revised as to absorb and hold a larger proportion of our idle youth, and even if effective vocational programs would result in placing larger numbers of our youth in profitable employment, there would still be a gap that only constructive recreational programs could fill.

Rural boys and girls are not naturally addicted to laziness and stagnation. The paucity of constructive recreational activity among them is due very largely to lack of community facilities which meet the leisure needs of older youth. Three out of every five of the farm youth interviewed in the Maryland survey thought that their local recreational resources were inadequate, one was uncertain about it, and only one thought that the facilities were sufficient.

As the following discussion will suggest, in recent years there have been substantial advances in the provision of leisure-time opportunities for older rural youth. Yet, when assessed in relation to the total need, the inadequacy of existing resources is apparent. In many quarters there is a complacency about the deficiencies in this area for which there is little justification. In addition to its intrinsic values, which have been discussed in chapter x, recreation affects health, education, and the general level of culture and well-being.

The N.Y.A. and W.P.A. promote public recreation.—In March, 1940, the National Youth Administration had in its employ sixty thousand out-of-school youth working on projects designed to provide community facilities or leadership for good use of leisure. Over half of these youth were building or repairing community houses, gymnasiums, swimming pools, and a great variety of other public recreational facilities. Over a third were giving leadership or assistance on community recreation programs. The remainder were engaged in library service and book repair, museum work, exhibits and visual aids, art, music, drama, writing, and craft work—all tasks with recreational implications.

Of the facilities constructed by N.Y.A. workers perhaps none is of greater value, for youth and adults, than community-center buildings. The numerous uses of the community building at Gunnison, Colorado, were described in chapter x. As constructed by N.Y.A.

workers, a community building typically contains classrooms, game-rooms, a library, a kitchen, and an assembly room adaptable for banquets or dances. Often there are small rooms for art exhibits, first-aid service, and vocational counseling. Sometimes there is a "little theater," and occasionally provision is made even for a broadcasting station. In some instances these facilities are economically obtained by remodeling or repairing a building originally erected for some other purpose.

Many of the young people employed in the student work program of the N.Y.A. are doing work described as research, surveys, and community service, much of which relates to recreation. Others work in library assistance, dramatics, art, and other undertakings both educational and recreational.

It is not known to what extent the N.Y.A.'s recreational activities benefited rural youth, although it is certain that they were reached in substantial numbers. Data are available, however, which throw some light on the number of rural youth who took advantage of the recreational activities undertaken with workers supplied by the Work Projects Administration. At the peak of its activity, it will be remembered, the W.P.A. furnished recreation leaders and assistants to more than seven thousand communities, nearly 70 per cent of which were rural. Sample studies indicate that, of the five million people who took an active part in the leisure programs to which the W.P.A. made a contribution, roughly one-fourth were in the sixteen-to-twenty-four-year age group. In addition, of course, many youth, in city and country, benefited from facilities built with W.P.A. assistance.

Clubs for older rural youth.—The Agricultural Extension Service and other public and private agencies active in the field of rural life are becoming increasingly conscious of the problems of older rural youth. During the early 1930's the Extension Service recognized that the 4-H clubs were holding and reaching young people above the age of sixteen or eighteen only to a very limited extent and began to stress the development of clubs for youth and young adults. By 1940 there were approximately 2,100 such clubs with more than seventy thousand members.

Many rural youth also participate in the work of the leading

national farm organizations, either as members of junior units or as full-fledged members of the senior organization. Though there are important differences in spirit, tone, and emphasis among them, the national farm organizations have the common aims of promoting co-operation among farmers, providing educational, social, and recreational opportunities, and improving rural life. One-fourth of the eight hundred thousand members of the National Grange are under thirty years of age. All persons over the age of fourteen who are members of farm families are eligible to full membership in the Grange, and young members are encouraged to take an active part in the management of the organization. In the Farmers' Educational and Co-operative Union of America, which concentrates largely upon the advancement of the co-operative movement, persons between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one in member-families are designated as "juniors." They have all the rights of adult membership without the payment of fees and, in addition, the privilege of organizing local junior departments which have the benefit of special services from the National Educational Department of the organization. Farmers' Union Juniors are particularly strong in the wheat states of the Northwest. The American Farm Bureau Federation co-operates widely with the rural youth-serving activities of the Extension Service and the vocational agriculture departments in high schools and in a few states, notably Michigan, has organized junior farm bureaus.

Not to be overlooked is a somewhat different type of organization—the American Country Life Association, which also has a Youth Section. The parent-organization is a national association of rural sociologists and community leaders which has long worked effectively for the upbuilding of a fine American rural culture. For a number of years it has sponsored a Student Section composed of students in agricultural colleges. More recently the designation of this group has been changed to Youth Section with the idea of making its scope broad enough to admit clubs of out-of-school rural youth and of emphasizing its aim to co-operate with all other worthy rural youth organizations.

The local groups of youth in all these organizations carry on a variety of activities designed to advance their own education, recrea-

tion, health, knowledge of economic problems, and skill in managing co-operative enterprises. Here and there they operate small-scale credit unions and co-operative producers' or consumers' associations; a few groups manage co-operative housing associations on college or university campuses.

In some parts of the country, particularly in the Middle West, state-wide associations of rural youth clubs have been organized. Indiana Rural Youth, sponsored by the Extension Service, embraces young people's organizations in eighty of the state's ninety-two counties, with a membership of approximately eight thousand between eighteen and thirty years of age. Illinois has a similar organization approximately equal in size for farm youth aged seventeen to twenty-eight. Iowa has a Rural Young People's Assembly in which junior farm bureaus and rural youth clubs under other sponsorship hold constituent membership.

Character-building and civic organizations.—Rural youth are touched to a limited extent by Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions, Exchange, Optimist, and Civitan clubs; by the United States Junior Chamber of Commerce; by women's clubs; by the "Scouting" organizations; and by church young people's societies. Though all these associations are composed largely of urban people, hundreds of their local units are found in towns or villages where rural life is a major interest. Most of them make efforts to extend their influence and services into the open country.

The "service clubs" for business and professional men are often found in a variety of helpful relationships with the 4-H clubs and the Future Farmers of America groups; sometimes they sponsor similar local organizations for boys and girls. In the activities of service clubs there are two trends which should be encouraged: (1) without decreasing their solicitude for younger boys and girls, some far-sighted organizations are broadening their programs to encompass the needs of older youth, and (2) a few clubs are supplanting contests and competitions among individuals, which have been too conspicuous a feature in the past, by undertakings in which co-operation for community advancement is stressed.

The Junior Chamber of Commerce has initiated a plan for co-operative activities by young people from town and country which

merits extension and is stressing the importance of augmenting the cultural and recreational resources of rural communities. The principal contribution of the women's clubs to rural youth is in the field of educational aids, including scholarships in high schools and colleges and supplementary vocational guidance. Although relatively few youth are being helped at present, the value of this type of assistance has already been indicated. In addition to its immediate benefits, it acquaints an influential group of women with the economic and educational status of rural youth and may hasten the public provision of better rural educational opportunities.

The "Scouting" organizations, including the Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts, and the Camp Fire Girls, reach into many small towns but have not been extended on any large scale into the open country and until recently have held relatively few active participants beyond the age of eighteen. The Boy Scouts are attempting to spread into the country and have recently initiated a new type of work designed to appeal especially to farm boys old enough for occupational tryouts and other vocational investigations.

Both the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. are still very largely urban, with their rural units relatively few and small. Rapid extension of the full services of these organizations into rural areas would probably require some use of funds collected by them in urban areas. This transfer, amply justified by the facts of the situation, is nevertheless difficult to bring about. Both organizations now place considerable emphasis upon expanding "diluted" forms of their service among rural youth. Half of the 6,500 Hi-Y clubs of the Y.M.C.A. are in villages and towns of less than ten thousand population, and the Y.W.C.A. estimates that one-third of its 340,000 Girl Reserves are in small towns and country places.

The various church young people's organizations include many village and farm youth and can be so conducted as to constitute a powerful lever in the building of a wholesome and happy rural culture, as is evidenced by instances of success in some places. For their potentialities to be realized, a lessening of overemphasis upon denominational separation and a willingness of small churches to combine in co-operative larger units appear to be essential.

Most rural youth, however, have no effective contact with any of

the organizations which have been mentioned, except perhaps the church. Many rural communities are virtually untouched or very inadequately served by any youth organization. These facts have been repeatedly confirmed by detailed surveys of rural youth. Studies of unmarried rural young people aged sixteen to twenty-five in four Oregon counties and two Arkansas counties disclosed that nearly 80 per cent of the out-of-school youth had no affiliation with any organization except the church and its societies. These figures correspond closely with the findings of the American Youth Commission's study in Maryland, where interviews with young people on farms and in villages revealed that 86 per cent of the former and 76 per cent of the latter were not members of any club. The combined coverage of farm organizations and other civic and character-building associations is significantly small in relation to the numbers of older rural youth who might be served. The organizations face the challenge of a nearly untouched field. All of them can well expand their programs, not as competitors, but as powerful allies in enlivening the rural church, modernizing rural education, and providing library service, recreational facilities, and other essential elements of a basic culture for America's rural youth.

FURTHER NEEDS AND POSSIBILITIES

In every phase of the rural youth problem which one investigates, one encounters basically the same situation: a number of agencies and organizations are active, and here and there brilliant programs are in operation; but the nation over the needs of the great majority of rural young people are not being adequately met. In the area of occupational adjustment the desirability of schools and other community agencies devoting more attention to the needs of older rural youth has already been stressed. It is equally important that, in co-operation with the schools, the public employment offices increase their efforts to serve rural youth. There is no apparent need for any considerable increase in the number of offices, but the staffs of existing offices must be augmented to enable them to give adequate guidance and placement service to youth, and arrangements must be developed for extending this service into rural areas. One immediate objective should be the improvement and expansion of the itinerant

service of public employment offices, referred to in chapter v, under which designated staff members travel throughout their respective areas to give counseling and placement help to young people from farms and villages. In view of the stubborn, long-term factors involved in the situation of older rural youth, the desirability of continuing to provide young people with work, earning, and learning opportunities, along the lines pioneered by the N.Y.A. and C.C.C., should also be emphasized. It is essential that satisfactory programs be developed for helping youth to bridge the gap between school and absorption into the regular economic activity of the nation.

Schools and other community agencies have an obligation not only to provide occupational adjustment service to the youth in their areas but to see that the efforts of all the agencies in the field are well co-ordinated. At present this co-ordination is pretty generally lacking. It is essential also that they keep a constant eye on national as well as local occupational trends and economic shifts. Increasing use should be made of the facts available from the Occupational Information and Guidance Service of the United States Office of Education, from the Occupational Outlook Service of the Department of Labor, and from other federal and state agencies.

Among the trends of long standing likely to be accelerated on account of the continued advancement in productive efficiency is a gradual growth of the service occupations to a position of greater relative importance than they occupied when the "economy of scarcity" kept most workers busy producing goods rather than services. The facts suggest that in the future, in rural as well as in urban communities, a substantially larger number of persons will be occupied in providing an increasing variety of services, ranging from the professional to the simpler forms. More will be absorbed in various types of educational service, health service, recreation leadership, librarianship, and work with social service organizations. This is a happy augury for rural America, which for the most part, as we have seen, stands in great need of these very services.

Every possibility of training promising rural youth for the service fields should be assiduously explored. With imagination and ingenuity many young people can be inducted into careers rewarding

to themselves and to their communities. To facilitate the administration of Tennessee's home-demonstration program the state is divided into four districts. Each of these has a special agent-in-training to assist the regular agents and fill in during emergencies. The arrangement enables the extension organization to improve its service and at the same time assures it a future supply of well-trained agents. Further experimentation with such arrangements on the part of all agencies serving rural America is clearly desirable. The surface has not been scratched in developing apprentice plans in the service occupations. Where a county has too few public health nurses to meet the commonly accepted standard of one nurse to every two thousand of population, and also has girls eager to prepare themselves for careers in the public health field, it is surely worth while to attempt to work out arrangements whereby some of these girls can be assigned to help the overburdened nurses and at the same time obtain the training and experience they need. In a score of other important fields there are opportunities for training youth for types of service rural areas badly need. What is needed is resourcefulness and the willingness to abandon traditions where they appear to stand in the way of promising new possibilities for helping rural youth and enriching rural life.

In the area of education.—The United States has more than seven million students enrolled in public junior, senior, and standard four-year high schools—more than are receiving a secondary education in all of the rest of the world. We are the first nation in history to adopt by informal common consent, and actually to approach achievement of, the distinctively American ideal of secondary education for all. However, our great recent progress must not obscure the fact that well over a third of our rural youth of high-school age are not in school and that relatively only a handful of communities as yet offer in their local public school systems a complete secondary education through the fourteenth grade.

The Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association and the American Association of School Administrators have proposed as a practicable goal a situation in which half of our youth would complete the fourteenth grade (two years beyond the four-year high school). Such an extension of secondary education

would have constructive effects of the highest importance, removing large numbers of older youth from an overcrowded labor market, affording them better vocational preparation, and equipping them more adequately to understand the complex social problems of the time. The achievement of the objective presupposes swift improvement in the offerings and holding power of rural high schools as well as a great increase in the number and quality of public junior colleges and regional schools especially equipped for vocational training.

A third requisite is equally essential—expanded programs of public work and education for financially underprivileged but competent youth who would otherwise be unable to avail themselves of further schooling. From the viewpoint of the pressing needs of youth, it matters little whether the opportunities to continue their education are made possible by a federal agency or by state and local agencies, perhaps with federal financial assistance. The essential point is that the opportunities must be provided. A central key to progress in our day is intergovernmental co-operation. Let the problem be attacked by the joint efforts of each of the several federal and state agencies in the rural youth field. Let local public and private organizations join in the common enterprise. Valuable lessons in federal-state-local co-operation have already been learned in the experience of the Agricultural Extension Service, whose system of organization will be described in chapter xiii.

In the areas of health and recreation.—One cannot fail to believe that with the obvious natural advantages for healthful living inherent in a rural environment, the health and physical fitness of older youth in rural America can be brought to higher standards than are revealed by studies of the United States Public Health Service and by the examinations of young men by Selective Service boards. Youth aged sixteen to twenty-four, especially when out of school, constitute the most neglected group in our population with respect to health service. Three-fourths of their actual dental needs are now unremedied, and the Maryland survey disclosed that rural youth receive far less than their proportionate share of dental attention. Nearly one-third of the sons and daughters of farm laborers reported they had never had the services of a dentist at any time in their lives.

Dental defects are often connected with malnutrition. A recent national conference on nutrition concluded that perhaps two-fifths of the American people do not obtain the proper food for maximum health. Some of the southern states have ample resources of soil and climate to produce a varied and sufficient diet for the entire population, yet malnutrition among the South's young people and defects and diseases resulting therefrom are relatively common. Fortunately, existing conditions can be improved. The schools, the Agricultural Extension Service, public health agencies, and the local press can all forward necessary education regarding the correction of dietary deficiencies. However, education cannot be the only answer. Equally necessary is an improvement in the general economic condition of the ill-nourished persons. It might be thought at first that rural people would only have to be told what foodstuffs to produce, but it must be remembered that many members of the rural population do not have access to the land even as renters or sharecroppers.

A modicum of recreation is almost indispensable for physical and mental soundness. Lingering notions among rural people that play is wicked and degrading, or at best a waste of time, must be dispelled. Through demonstrations of the possibilities of various leisure-time activities and other means rural people must become acquainted with the manifold advantages of organized forms of recreation—for youth, children, and adults. Rural schools can play an important part in whetting and satisfying their communities' appetite for a rich and well-balanced leisure-time program. Youth, too, can play a part by familiarizing themselves with recreational conditions and with the contributions the national government, their state, and their local community are making and can make toward improving them. In many instances they can help to develop community awareness of both unmet needs and unexploited recreational opportunities. At least some youth can make a contribution to the development and leadership of leisure programs.

The responsibility of the community and the school.—The rural community has an obligation to its older youth, and the youth have an obligation to do what they can to solve their own problems and to improve their community. The obligation requires that the community and its young people study all aspects of the local situation

and make the most of local leadership and local resources; that they keep informed of and in contact with the numerous national and state agencies from which financial aid and other forms of co-operation are available; and that the community organize itself internally for effective co-operative efforts to meet the needs of all groups in the population, including older youth.

By participating in such efforts rural schools, without seeking to pre-empt the field—with cordiality toward other agencies, public and private, making sincere efforts in behalf of older youth—can strengthen themselves and become in many places pioneers in the achievement of that finer rural culture of the mid-twentieth century which can now be envisioned. It is fitting that they should be pioneers, for theirs is a great pioneer tradition.

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CHAPTER XIII

ADULT EDUCATION IN RURAL AREAS

It is my personal and professional belief that the problems of many of the forty- and fifty- and sixty-year-old people in the town of Boscawen, even the problems of vocational adjustment to changing times, are as much beyond their ability to solve, unaided by some educational procedure, as the problems of a sixteen- or eighteen-year-old youngster are beyond his ability to solve without the vocational guidance and the educational training of the present school system.

STRIKING as this statement is, a careful examination of the situation of rural adults, in towns and open country, will show that it is not exaggerated. Because of the rapid progress of mechanization and the accumulation of knowledge in numerous fields affecting agriculture, from a purely technical point of view farming now requires more knowledge and skill than ever before. Readjustments in farming techniques, however, represent the simplest changes made necessary by economic and technological developments. Years of depressed prices and overhanging surpluses have taught the American farmer in the most bitter fashion that his problems are not confined to the area of production. Agriculture has been absorbed into a complex and unstable industrial economy, and the repercussions of this development have been felt in every phase of rural life. Farming has become a complicated business influenced by the business cycle and national and international developments. Old social and economic problems have been accentuated and new ones have emerged. How can the tendency for the farmers to lose control of the land they operate be arrested? How can the slender resources of rural people be stretched to provide proper educational opportunities for their children and adequate facilities in the fields of health, recreation, and welfare? Today successful farming and the fulfillment of civic responsibilities both demand a broad range of knowledge in many fields. In addition, they require increased social understanding, changed attitudes, and new techniques of co-operation, for

many of the problems faced by rural people can be solved only through collective action.

Rural women as well as men face the necessity of adjusting themselves to a more complex and interrelated world. They share their menfolk's civic responsibilities and, because farming is a co-operative family enterprise, their concern with economic developments. Homemaking, the phase of life for which they have particular responsibility, requires more knowledge, insight, and skill than ever before. Many of the tasks which women have traditionally assumed have been affected by the integration of farming with the general economy; for example, the increased amount of buying and selling done by farm families has made the management of family finances more important and more difficult. In the fields relating to homemaking, as in those affecting agriculture, there has been a great accumulation of knowledge as a result of the scientific investigations of the twentieth century. Consider, for example, the advances in the field of nutrition in the past decade alone. Perhaps even more notable is the growth of knowledge about family relationships and child development. Information is now available which enormously facilitates the task of protecting children's health, developing their intelligence, and making them emotionally secure. Rural women are hungry for such information, and it is to the nation's interest that it should be made available to them. Adults—men and women—need adequate educational opportunities to secure the benefit of new scientific discoveries with implications for everyday living and to equip themselves to deal with the problems posed by dynamic social change.

Further educational needs of rural people.—Adult education in rural areas has still other important uses. The greater amount of leisure available to rural people and their growing longevity increase the need and value of types of education designed to make adult life richer and more satisfying. Not only those receiving some form of public assistance, but all those who are "ill-housed, ill-fed, and ill-clothed" need education to sustain their morale and to cope with the difficulties which confront them; in many cases those difficulties are born of ignorance or aggravated by it. Finally, many individuals who have lost their places in agriculture or in dwindling rural in-

dustries, such as forestry, need vocational retraining to prepare themselves for new occupations.

In addition to the educational needs caused by the necessity of adjusting themselves to a complex and rapidly changing world, many rural people require further schooling to make up gaps in their early education. In 1930, 6.9 per cent of the rural-farm population ten years of age or over and 4.8 per cent of the rural-nonfarm population were illiterate; and many adults classified as literate were unable to read with facility and real understanding anything but the simplest material. Of seventy-five million adult Americans, thirty-two million did not finish elementary school, and another thirty-two million did not complete high school. Were separate figures available for rural areas, they would undoubtedly reveal a worse situation. Furthermore, much of the schooling rural people did receive was hardly effective judged by modern standards. Floyd W. Reeves writes:

As a result of educational research, elementary and secondary education have probably changed more during the last twenty years than during the entire century preceding. For example, fourth-grade children taught reading with modern methods read better than eighth-grade children read fifteen years ago.

Millions of rural people are handicapped by deficiencies in their early education and thus find it difficult to obtain the knowledge they need to make a better adjustment in the modern world. Opportunities to overcome those deficiencies are clearly needed.

Existing provisions for rural adult education.—The educational needs of adults are as broad and diverse as life itself, and no one agency has had responsibility for formulating a program to meet them all. Furthermore, the efforts to meet particular needs have all had their origin in relatively recent years. It is not surprising, therefore, that adequate and well-rounded adult-education programs are almost nowhere available in rural America. Encouragement may be derived from the fact that promising programs have been developed to meet particular needs and that they have attracted broad participation. Millions of rural adults are today engaged in some type of organized educational activity. Indeed, largely because of the financial assistance rural areas have received from the states and the federal government, they have not lagged behind cities in making

provision for certain types of adult education. However, as we shall see, many of the educational needs of rural people are still not being met.

For purposes of consideration existing rural adult education programs may be divided into two groups: (1) those which are vocational or at any rate have farming and homemaking as their core interests and (2) programs of a more general character. The distinction is by no means a hard and fast one. Many of the programs in the first group are vocational only in a very general sense and include numerous civic and cultural activities which belong in the province of general education. Similarly, many of the programs in the second group contribute to new understandings, attitudes, or skills useful in farming and homemaking.

THE CO-OPERATIVE AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE

Because its activities touch almost every aspect of rural life, the Co-operative Agricultural Extension Service has already been mentioned many times in this report, but it is basically an adult-education agency—the largest and, in many respects, the most successful adult-education agency in the United States, if not in the world. In its more than twenty-five years of existence the Extension Service has developed into an agency of approximately nine thousand workers, with at least one representative in every important agricultural county in the United States, Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico. It is estimated that in 1940 more than 5,700,000 rural families were influenced by some phase of its program. Definite changes in practice were made on 3,800,000 farms, in 1,700,000 farm homes, and in more than 560,000 other homes as a result of Extension Service teachings.

As its name implies, the Co-operative Agricultural Extension Service is a joint undertaking. While its organization pattern varies somewhat among the states, in general it may be said that it is co-operatively administered and supported by the Department of Agriculture, the land-grant colleges, county governments, and, in some states, farm organizations. Of approximately thirty-three million dollars expended for extension work in 1940, about eighteen and a half million dollars came from federal grants, almost six and a half million from state funds, more than seven million dollars from

county appropriations, and approximately one million dollars from farm organizations.

The majority of Extension Service workers are stationed in the field, in agricultural counties throughout the nation. In 2,953 counties there is a county agent who has primary responsibility for work with farmers and may be in charge of the work of other local agents. In more than 1,900 counties there are home-demonstration agents, who work with farm women. Nineteen states employ approximately 300 club agents, who devote themselves primarily to work with 4-H clubs and rural youth organizations. These agents have the help of nearly 1,200 assistant agents and, as will be developed below, a vast corps of volunteer leaders. In addition, in the southern states there are 270 Negro county agents and 230 Negro home-demonstration agents who work with their own race.

In addition to this formidable local organization, there are state extension staffs, with headquarters at the land-grant colleges, which vary in size from eight members in Nevada to more than one hundred in New York. Some state staff members are supervisors or administrators, but the majority are subject-matter specialists in some one phase of agriculture, homemaking, or rural life. New Hampshire, which does not have an unusually large extension staff, has specialists in farm management, marketing, forestry, horticulture, poultry, dairying, agronomy, rural organization and recreation, clothing, and nutrition. Specialists not only supply information and help local agents but travel throughout their respective states to hold meetings and give demonstrations in their particular fields; in addition, they help in the training of volunteer local leaders.

The federal extension organization, which is part of the Department of Agriculture, is relatively small, in a recent year numbering only about sixty workers apart from the clerical staff. The federal organization attempts to supervise and co-ordinate extension work throughout the nation. However, although it has responsibilities for approving state plans of work and state budgets and for auditing accounts and expenditures to make certain that they comply with the requirements of federal statutes, in actual practice its agents "act more in the capacity of advisers than of inspectors." Like the state staffs, the federal organization includes a number of subject-matter

specialists, who attempt to stimulate and improve the work in their respective fields in the entire nation. In addition, the federal office contains a Division of Extension Information with a Motion Picture Section, a Visual Instruction and Editorial Section, and an Agricultural Exhibits Section.

The division of administrative responsibility.—The state is the key administrative unit in agricultural extension work. State extension offices recommend or approve the selection of local extension workers. These workers are supervised by, and are responsible to, their state organizations. They are also responsible to the Department of Agriculture, but it has no direct administrative contact with them and to the extent it controls their work at all operates entirely through the state extension offices.

Primarily to enlist the active co-operation of their rural populations in extension work but also to secure additional funds for the work from local sources, the states share some of their administrative authority with county governing boards and organizations of local people. Thus in most states local extension workers are responsible to their county officials as well as to their state offices and the United States Department of Agriculture. While county boards seldom engage in direct supervision, they can readily familiarize themselves with the caliber of the work of local agents and, through their power to discontinue appropriations and other means, can secure the dismissal of agents with whom they are dissatisfied.

In connection with extension work the delegated authority of local organizations varies from committees which participate in an advisory capacity in such phases of extension work as program planning to groups which have a large measure of general administrative control. In some states co-operating groups have more authority than county governing boards, which may be compelled by law, for example, to make appropriations for extension work if such groups reach a stipulated size or raise a specified minimum amount from membership dues. In twelve states legislation specifies that the co-operating group shall be the Farm Bureau, a private organization organized "to promote, protect, and represent the business, economic, social, and educational interests of the farmers of the nation." Co-operating groups vary in composition in the rest of the country but

typically include outstanding farmers and representatives of governmental bodies, schools, farm organizations, and committees organized in connection with federal agricultural programs.

So much for the organization and administration of this gigantic venture in rural adult education. What are some of the objectives, activities, and procedures of the Co-operative Agricultural Extension Service?

The program in agriculture.—County agents were originally employed to help farmers to farm more efficiently, and, according to a recent Extension Service report, that is still “their first and fundamental task.” By bringing farmers the findings of the United States Department of Agriculture and the land-grant colleges and experiment stations, which have been established with federal aid in every state of the Union, they attempt to encourage the widespread adoption of successful and scientifically sound agricultural practices. In recent years, as in the past, they have worked with farmers to improve crop yields, to control insects and diseases that cause crop losses, and to protect farm animal health. However, changing agricultural conditions and the emergence of new problems have challenged the Extension Service to broaden its program, and attention is no longer limited to such technical and productive aspects of agriculture. County agents now also help farmers with their management, marketing, and credit problems. Every effort is made to provide not only a broader but a better-integrated service. As M. L. Wilson, director of Extension Service work, writes:

In a few areas today, and in some areas in the past, county agents have rendered primarily special and individual services, being in a sense cafeteria workers who served up advice on sheep, diseases of cattle, spraying of fruit trees, laying out of terraces, and on many other special topics as this advice was needed. Gradually, under the impact of action programs, and changing agricultural situations, they found that their field of service could be much enlarged by working through groups with a somewhat broader set of problems. This program now leads them still further in the direction of considering not only isolated problems relating to farm income, farm practices, conservation, and the like, but requires that they become social engineers—aware of and dealing constructively with the whole inter-relationships in the cultural setting.

In keeping with this new emphasis, the Extension Service is now experimenting with farm and home unit demonstrations based upon long-time plans covering every phase of farm living, including land

use, erosion control, planned crop rotations, diversified farming, soil improvement, a more adequate family food budget, home improvement, budgets, and records. Texas now has four hundred such demonstrations, and their use is spreading throughout the South and the entire country.

Plans made for individual farmers not only are internally consistent but are adjusted as far as possible to national agricultural conditions and policies. The Extension Service recognizes the extent to which successful farming is dependent upon the co-operative adjustment of all farmers to the national and international developments affecting the demand for agricultural products. The Service has not, however, decided the exact degree of responsibility it should assume in connection with the federal "action" programs for agriculture. Many of the major problems involved were settled with the drafting in the summer of 1938 of the Mount Weather agreement, to be discussed in chapter xv, and the subsequent signing of memorandums of understanding between the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and the Extension Service and experiment stations in practically every state. However, there is still difference of opinion between those who believe that the vitality, and ultimately perhaps even the survival, of the Extension Service depends upon its active participation in federal agricultural programs and those who fear to jeopardize the Service's status as an educational agency; and these differences reflect themselves in variations in practice among the states. Even with regard to explaining the provisions and benefits of action programs a consistent policy has not yet been developed. The Extension Service almost everywhere participates in supplying information, but workers may be enthusiastic or noncommittal. On the other hand, in most states the Extension Service has assumed responsibility for training local committeemen to administer action programs, and the Service is everywhere articulating its own educational work with national policies and programs. In recent years, for example, extension workers have devoted a large proportion of their time to teaching the practices and adjustments required by the nation's soil conservation program. Furthermore, in all counties where co-operative agriculture planning committees have been organized (see chap. xv) the county agent serves as secretary.

Homemaking and community phases of the program.—The Exten-

sion Service's program for rural women, which is the special concern of home-demonstration agents, has undergone an evolution similar to that of the agricultural program. Emphasis was originally placed on homemaking techniques, such as the preparation of food, plain sewing and repair of clothing, and the use of household equipment. But the program has been constantly broadened until it now deals with every aspect of family living. The art of making a home comfortable and attractive now receives as much attention as more strictly utilitarian phases of homemaking. Women are given many opportunities to study child development, adolescent and child psychology, and family relationships. In some states special efforts have been made to enrol mothers of young children in home-demonstration groups. Paralleling and dovetailing with the attention paid to farm management in the Extension Service's agricultural program is the emphasis on household management in the work with women.

Interest in the welfare of the family leads naturally to consideration of conditions in the community. The realization that farming is geared to a volatile and highly interdependent economy leads naturally to a concern with national affairs. As a consequence of the broadening of the extension programs, groups originally organized to study specific techniques of farming and homemaking are today considering general social, economic, and civic problems. Furthermore, they are attempting through action to work out solutions to many of their local problems. The contributions Extension Service groups have made to the improvement of facilities for recreation, health, and library service have been mentioned at various points in this report. In Virginia home-demonstration clubs are studying the situation of older rural youth and engaging in a number of activities designed to enlarge their opportunities. West Virginia clubs have standing committees on various phases of community organization—health, schools, citizenship, adult education—which function throughout the year. Other home-demonstration groups have landscaped school grounds, sponsored well-child clinics, and taken responsibility for serving hot lunches in rural schools. In some places extension groups have taken the initiative in organizing broad programs of community improvement.

The Extension Service has encouraged and assisted the attempts

of rural people to solve their economic problems through co-operative action. For example, extension workers taught farm families how to secure maximum benefit from the frozen-food lockers which became available in increasing numbers in 1939. In the same year they gave advice and assistance to more than seven thousand co-operative organizations, with a membership of approximately nine hundred thousand men and women.

Methods of reaching rural people.—Bringing the best available information about farming and homemaking to more than 5,700,000 rural families is a large job even for an organization of nine thousand people. Without considering the rural-nonfarm population, the average Alabama county has more than four thousand farm families and a farm population of approximately twenty-one thousand—a sizable class for the one, two, or three local extension workers. Obviously, the Extension Service must exercise the utmost ingenuity in selecting and devising means for reaching the large segment of the population it was established to serve.

As is to be expected, in view of the nature of the Extension Service program and the close relationship which ordinarily exists between extension agents and the people in their area, a great deal of Extension Service work is conducted through personal contact. During 1940 extension agents made approximately three and a quarter million visits to more than 1,700,000 different farms and homes. They were paid almost six times as many visits as they made by people eager to confer with them, and received numerous additional inquiries, many of which concerned federal agricultural programs, by letter and telephone.

However, even these figures are dwarfed by the statistics of attendance at meetings sponsored by the Extension Service. In 1940 such meetings were attended by more than fifty-eight million persons (see Fig. 8). Extension workers are increasingly attempting to deal with organized groups, so that information can be conveyed to a number of persons at one time. Prominent among the groups with whom extension agents deal are county associations which foster extension work and assist in program planning, home-demonstration clubs, 4-H clubs, and older rural youth organizations. In a recent year there were more than 6,800 county associations, with nearly

900,000 members. In 1940 over 1,100,000 women were organized in 51,000 home-demonstration clubs. As has been brought out in other chapters, there were approximately 80,000 4-H clubs and more than 2,100 extension-sponsored older youth organizations.

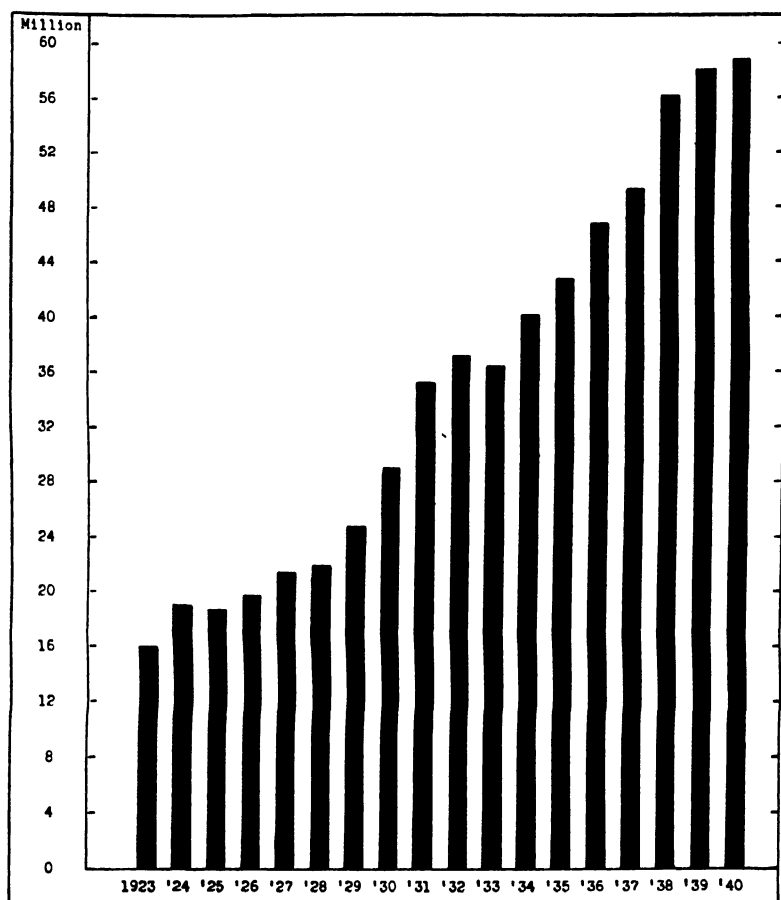


FIG. 8 —Total attendance at all extension meetings held, 1923-40 (includes attendance at meetings held by local leaders at which extension agents were not present).

In four midwestern states studied in 1938 it was found that there was an average of 1.7 extension workers per county and an average of twenty 4-H clubs per county. There were, of course, in addition, many other extension-sponsored groups for men, women, and older youth. In New York, to take another example, a typical home-

demonstration agent has thirty to forty homemaking groups in her county, each of which meets two or three times a month.

The use of volunteer local leaders.—If extension workers were to attempt to meet regularly with such organized groups, it would leave them with little or no time for their other duties. To meet this situation, very early in the history of the Extension Service extension agents began to enlist the help of well-equipped local people in their work with both children and adults. To provide leadership for the expanding home-demonstration program, for example, outstanding women from a number of communities were brought together at a central point to receive instruction in some particular phase of homemaking from a home-demonstration agent or a specialist from the state staff. These women were also given some practical suggestions for conveying their newly acquired knowledge to their neighbors. They then went back to their communities and conducted demonstrations and led meetings in the field of work in which they had been instructed. Similarly, farmers were given special training so that they could demonstrate scientific agricultural practices to their friends and neighbors. Both men and women were pressed into service as leaders of 4-H and older youth groups. Officers of home-demonstration clubs and county associations fostering extension work also assumed leadership responsibilities, primarily in connection with program-planning and community activities. Through the years a constantly growing number of rural people have offered to serve without pay as local leaders in connection with one or another phase of Extension Service activity (see Fig. 9). Counting men, women, and youth, more than seven hundred thousand individuals volunteered their services in 1940.

The use of local leaders has more than fulfilled its original purpose of aiding in the diffusion of scientific knowledge about farming and homemaking. The close contact of leaders and extension workers has helped to keep the extension program attuned to the wishes and needs of farm people. Participation in leadership work has been of great value to the leaders themselves. Many men and women have acquired an authoritative knowledge of particular phases of farming or homemaking as a result of the years of training they have received. In the process of learning and teaching their neighbors they have

acquired increased poise and self-confidence and have developed latent abilities. The existence of the network of competent and reliable leadership throughout rural America is actually and potentially of great value to the nation.

Other methods employed in extension work.—While local leaders are the Extension Service's most effective arm in reaching rural people, it makes good use of almost every important method employed in

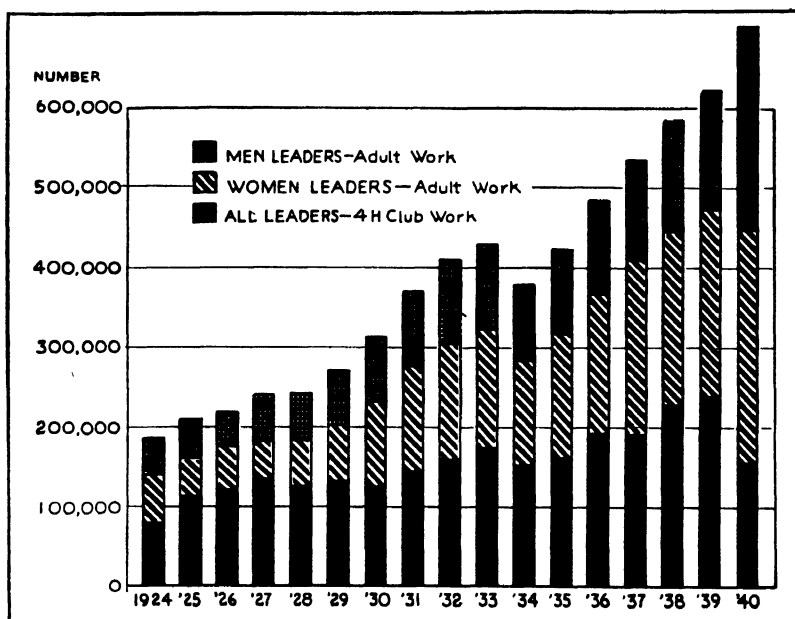


FIG. 9.—Number of local leaders of extension clubs or groups, 1924-40

adult education. Its increasing utilization of unit demonstrations has already been referred to, and demonstrations of particular techniques in farming and homemaking are more widely employed; in 1940 approximately seven hundred thousand such demonstrations were undertaken in connection with Extension Service programs. Demonstrations furnish convincing and dramatic proof of the value of adopting modern practices on the farm and in the home, and their value is heightened by the fact that they are conducted by farmers and homemakers themselves. From the earliest beginnings of the Extension Service, demonstration has been one of the most success-

ful and characteristic means of securing widespread and rapid acceptance of recommended practices.

The Extension Service also disseminates information through the written word, the radio, motion pictures, and exhibits. In 1939 the federal extension office distributed more than four million Department of Agriculture bulletins and discussion pamphlets and a great deal of mimeographed material. Besides helping in the distribution of this literature, the land-grant colleges prepare a great deal of additional material to meet the special needs of their own populations. For example, in 1939 the Alabama Polytechnic Institute distributed nearly nine hundred thousand of its own subject-matter bulletins, supplied newspapers throughout the state with articles of special interest to farm people, prepared a tabloid publication for distribution with weekly country newspapers, and published a monthly bulletin for 4-H Club members. The Extension Service also utilizes the radio to bring information and news to rural people. The Department of Agriculture prepares a great deal of radio material which is released, in many cases through the land-grant colleges, to co-operating radio stations. Many of the colleges adapt the federal material to local conditions as well as originate material, and a growing number sponsor additional state-wide and local programs.

The Extension Service is making increasing use of various means of presenting information visually. In 1939 educational exhibits prepared by the Agricultural Exhibits Section of the federal extension office were displayed at fifty-eight fairs and expositions which had an attendance of more than ten million persons. In the same year it is estimated that nearly eight million people saw Department of Agriculture motion pictures at more than fifty-three thousand showings. Films are lent without charge for educational use and are usually shown at meetings of extension-sponsored groups and farm organizations and at schools with vocational programs. Many state extension services co-operate with the federal office by distributing films and by making available to local communities equipment for showing them. In Massachusetts and a number of other states the land-grant colleges are beginning to produce supplementary films on subjects of particular interest to their rural populations.

In addition to disseminating information, the Extension Service

has encouraged rural people to think through their own social and economic problems by promoting the organization of discussion groups. To supply participants with necessary background information, the Department of Agriculture prepared a series of pamphlets, rich in economic data, on such subjects as taxes, foreign trade, co-ops, farm finance, and the extent to which farmers should share in the national income. Regional conferences were held to give extension workers instruction in techniques of conducting group discussions. However, extension workers are accustomed to deal with more concrete problems and to give out information rather than to stimulate others to talk, and they have not everywhere proved satisfactory discussion leaders. Some states, furthermore, have not cooperated wholeheartedly with the discussion project, in the fear that it might be a disguised means of indoctrinating people with a particular political viewpoint. An increasing number of states regard this fear as unjustified and make use of the discussion material with both adult and older youth groups. West Virginia and a few other states have prepared additional discussion material and booklets on conducting group meetings.

Many other methods used in extension work might be mentioned. For example, the Ohio Extension Service sponsors farmers' institutes throughout the state during which those in attendance consider cooperative approaches to their common problems; it holds one- or two-day schools in various counties on such subjects as farm machinery, beef-cattle feeding, gardening, dairying, soils, and crops; it sponsors horse shows and apple and potato shows and arranges tours for fruit-growers and livestock producers. Methods similar to these are employed in every state, and a number of land-grant colleges offer on-campus short courses for farm people. A traditional annual feature at every state agricultural college is Farmers' and Homemakers' Week. This is an event which is packed with educational and recreational features, typically including speeches of general interest and opportunities for intensive study in a wide variety of farming and homemaking subjects. Year after year Farmers' Week attracts a huge crowd to the campuses of the land-grant colleges; in some of the more populous states attendance ranges between fifteen thousand and twenty thousand.

An appraisal of the Extension Service.—The value of the Extension Service program has perhaps been sufficiently indicated by the foregoing description. There can be no gainsaying the worth of a program which in one year influences actual changes in practice on 3,800,000 farms and in 2,250,000 rural homes. It must be realized, too, that there is some diffusion of the scientific knowledge disseminated by the Extension Service from those whom it reaches directly to the other members of the farm population and that the less tangible benefits of extension work—its effects on human beings whether or not they are reflected in observed changes in practice—are at least as important as the concrete accomplishments by which the effectiveness of the Service is usually gauged.

In the first twenty-five years of its existence, as M. L. Wilson justly claims, the Extension Service has played a most significant part in revolutionizing the attitude of the great mass of the farm population toward the application of science in agriculture and homemaking. The kind of recommendations which would have been scoffed at as theoretical and impractical by most farm people a quarter of a century ago are today accepted and applied promptly and confidently. The Extension Service deserves a great deal of credit for this achievement. Important changes in its program are necessary, however, if it is to be equally influential in the future. While the diffusion of scientific knowledge about farming and homemaking is an important and endless function, the need for emphasis upon it is lessened by the very success of the Extension Service not only in spreading such knowledge but in creating a readiness to accept it. Although the problem of increasing the production of many farm commodities has immediate urgency because of wartime conditions, over the longer term educational activities connected with the productive phases of agriculture have declined in relative importance. Meanwhile, the social and economic problems confronting the rural population have become more numerous and more difficult. It is these problems, and the cultural needs of rural people, which demand major attention in the years ahead. Can the Extension Service help rural people to solve their tangled social and economic problems and to lead richer lives, as it helped them in the past to deal with the technical problems of farming and homemaking?

It is everywhere attempting to, but the new objectives are still subordinate to the old.

Vexing problems remain to be solved in the administration of extension work. The problem of maintaining a vital connection with national agricultural programs without jeopardizing its status as an educational agency has already been referred to. The Extension Service also faces serious difficulties in attaining such a balance between federal, state, county, and co-operating organization control as to enable it to serve all groups in the rural population in proportion to their numbers and needs; in the past it has failed in many places to reach enough of the poorer families who need its assistance most. In part, students of the Service agree, this is because it is disproportionately influenced by county governing boards, which in many cases are more interested in a worker's "popularity with influential farm leaders and the amount of deference shown to [board] members than with the method and quality of [his] work." The influence of county governing boards over local extension workers comes from the power they have in most states to withdraw funds and thus bring about the discontinuance of extension work in their areas. In a growing number of states the salaries of extension workers are now being paid completely from state and federal funds, which reduces the degree of influence local governmental units possess.

Even more in need of correction is the relationship of the Extension Service to the Farm Bureau in the twelve states where it is the local co-operating organization. Particularly in many places where the Farm Bureau contributes to the support of extension work, but in some places even where it does not, extension workers have tended to become the servants, not of the entire public, but of a semiprivate organization which is typically composed of the more prosperous farmers of the community. Their time is monopolized by this group, and, what is equally mischievous, they often come to accept its viewpoint and attitudes, in many cases losing even the desire to help the less prosperous farm families. Extension workers should continue to be responsible to the local communities they serve, but they owe that responsibility to all the people in their area. In fairness it must be said that influential Extension Service leaders are as keenly aware

as any outsider could be of the desirability of that ideal and that there is a pronounced trend toward more democratic local control of Extension Service activities. A conscientious attempt has been made in recent years to give farm people from every social and economic group a voice in the direction not only of the Extension Service program but also of the various federal action programs for agriculture. As will be developed in chapter xv, large numbers of committees have been established at both the county and the community levels to co-ordinate and unify the work of all agricultural programs, and every effort has been made to insure that these committees will be democratic in composition.

The seventeen southern states face a serious problem (to be discussed at greater length in chap. xiv) in the improvement and expansion of their extension programs for Negroes. There is convincing evidence that Negroes are not now being served to the extent warranted by their numbers and their needs. This situation obtains despite the existence of provisions in federal legislation which would permit the United States Department of Agriculture to secure a more equitable allocation of extension funds.

As the Extension Service broadens its program and increases its efforts to help low-income farm families, it will have to augment its present staff. In particular, more home-demonstration and club agents appear to be needed. Additional workers are also needed to enable the Extension Service to reach larger numbers of rural-non-farm people, who have as much interest as their neighbors in the open country in many of the newer phases of extension work.

OTHER PREDOMINANTLY VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS

A number of agencies besides the Extension Service are providing adult-education programs centering around the farm and the farm home, and most of these programs, too, are becoming progressively broader in scope. The curriculum of evening classes in homemaking offered—usually with federal aid—by many rural schools has undergone a development similar to that of the home economics program for secondary-school students, described in chapter vi. Growing emphasis is placed on the human rather than the material aspects of homemaking—on child development, family relationships, and mental

hygiene. Family financial planning and consumer buying are also receiving increasing attention. Since only a limited number of subjects can be covered in any one year, programs are often planned on a three- to five-year basis, usually with the assistance of an advisory group composed of class members and representatives of community organizations, in order to insure balance and breadth.

North Dakota, Kansas, and a few other states use circuit teachers, employed by the state board for vocational education, to conduct adult classes in homemaking, and in a few communities teachers have been recruited from the ranks of successful homemakers who have had professional training and, in some cases, teaching experience. In most places, however, classes are intrusted to experienced day-school teachers of proved competence. An increasing number of such teachers have had some preparation in the field of adult education, and in a number of states they are required to take in-service training. If, in addition, they are mature and not overburdened with day-school classes, they are usually successful in their work with adults.

Separate figures are not available showing the number of rural women enrolled in evening classes in homemaking. The parallel program for men in agriculture, although restricted to farm operators, in 1939 attracted an enrolment of 180,000 in federally aided classes alone. The work of evening classes in agriculture is highly practical, often centering upon specific farm or community problems. The evening-school class at Glastonbury, Connecticut, is the center of a community co-operative marketing project. The class at Chidester, Arkansas, has been influential in persuading the entire community to concentrate on one variety of cotton. In Cuero, Texas, members of the evening-school class have co-operated with high-school and part-time students in a livestock and poultry improvement program. Evening classes in vocational agriculture also give farmers an opportunity to think through the problems they face in adjusting their farming to new national agricultural policies. Many classes, for example, are built around soil conservation, and an increasing number are considering land-use planning.

At the adult, as at the youth and high-school levels, promising attempts are being made to correlate instruction in agriculture and

homemaking. In Vermont and a number of southern and midwestern states farm men and women are meeting together to discuss their common problems. In Indiana special committees have been organized to plan the work of community programs in agriculture and homemaking. Each committee is composed of the county superintendent of schools, representative farmers, extension workers, and vocational education teachers.

Other farming and homemaking programs.—In a number of rural communities which had been unable to provide adult classes in agriculture and homemaking the W.P.A., whose emergency educational program will be discussed at greater length later in the chapter, has conducted classes in recent years. Its work in the field of parent education and homemaking has been particularly successful. Courses are pointed to the situation and needs of those on relief, other unemployed groups, and low-income families generally. Teaching is extremely informal, with considerable use made of such devices as demonstrations, direct observation of children, and visits to health clinics, hospitals, and similar places. Men are encouraged to participate in certain phases of the work. The people in the lower-income groups who have been reached by W.P.A. courses have not only improved their understanding of human behavior and household management but in many cases have acquired increased self-confidence and become acquainted for the first time with certain community resources.

Many other agencies, including a number which are not ordinarily thought of in connection with adult education, are giving extremely effective instruction in farming and homemaking. The Farm Security Administration rehabilitation loan program, described in chapter xi, involves very intensive individual instruction in farming and homemaking. Rural social workers frequently furnish invaluable advice to their clients about family relationships and household management. Workers connected with the Soil Conservation Service do a great deal of educational as well as administrative work. Their instruction, furthermore, is by no means limited to the technical procedures necessary to prevent erosion. The Service recognizes that erosion can be controlled only by a complete farm program which considers the crops, the soil, and the whole farm economy.

Both in the field of agricultural education and in the field of homemaking education there is a pronounced need for better co-ordination of the existing programs for adults. In particular, there is need for closer co-operation between those responsible for the Extension Service programs and the federally aided evening classes in agriculture and home economics. The machinery for such co-operation has been set up at the federal level through the establishment of a joint committee representing the United States Office of Education and the Extension Service. In many states, too, formal or informal agreements have been made providing for the co-operation of extension workers and vocational teachers, and numerous instances of co-operation at the local level could be cited. In Kansas, for example, evening classes in vocational agriculture are sometimes conducted by county agents and extension specialists. However, the boundaries between the Extension Service program and the work of federally aided adult classes in agriculture and home economics are still ill defined, and in many places there is friction and rivalry between those responsible for the two programs. Particularly since neither the Extension Service nor the schools have adequate resources for their immense educational tasks, such wasteful competitiveness should not be tolerated by rural people. In view of the established position of the Extension Service in providing instruction for adults in farming and homemaking, John Dale Russell recommends that the schools should seldom offer courses in these fields when they cannot secure the active co-operation of local extension workers.

Vocational education in other fields.—Schools and other agencies have only scratched the surface in meeting the needs of rural adults for vocational education in fields other than agriculture and homemaking. Large numbers of rural people are engaged in business, in various types of service, and in manufacturing and industrial jobs and are interested in improving their proficiency in their present work or preparing themselves for some other field. In rural, as in urban, areas social and technological developments compel many adults to change vocations. Each year many rural adults migrate to cities in search of employment.

Despite the extent of the need, few vocational classes are available to rural people in fields other than agriculture and homemaking un-

less they live near fairly large-sized towns. Federal aid is available for adult classes in trades and industries. However, as was brought out in chapter vi, even at the high-school level trade and industrial education is difficult to provide in rural areas because of high per-pupil costs. Its provision at the adult level is further retarded by a federal requirement limiting instruction to a type supplemental to the usual employment of the trainee. In addition to making it impossible for those with a need or desire to prepare themselves for a different occupation to get the kind of training they need, this requirement adds to the difficulty of enrolling classes of reasonable size in rural areas.

A few rural schools are offering, without federal assistance, courses in various types of shop work, arts and crafts, mechanical drawing, and auto mechanics. A somewhat larger number offer commercial courses in typing, shorthand, business management, and business arithmetic. In a few rural communities the W.P.A. provides a number of vocational courses for adults. Some rural people are taking correspondence courses in vocational fields. The T.V.A. has an ambitious program of vocational training, but, unlike its other adult-education activities, it is primarily for the benefit of its own employees. The nation over, only a small minority of rural adults have opportunities for vocational study in fields other than agriculture and homemaking, and few or none have access to well-rounded programs likely to meet their interests and needs.

GENERAL ADULT EDUCATION

In the field of general education, which embraces Americanization and literacy instruction, social-civic education, classes in academic and cultural subjects, and health and physical education, deficiencies are even more marked in rural areas. Until recent years in the majority of rural communities no instruction was offered in any of these fields, except perhaps in connection with constantly broadening programs of vocational education. In the past decade or two the progress of reorganization has enabled an increasing number of rural schools to initiate adult-education programs. The radio has become a more potent educational device. Rural as well as urban people have benefited by two recent national programs: the adult-educational

tion program of the W.P.A. and the public-forum demonstrations sponsored by the United States Office of Education with funds supplied by the W.P.A.

Particularly encouraging is the increased participation of rural schools in meeting adult-education needs. In the 140 villages which Edmund deS. Brunner and his associates have been surveying at six-year intervals, only 9 schools offered adult-education work in 1924. The number increased to 22 by 1930 and to 44 by 1936. Of 215 New York State central rural schools studied by E. R. Hoskins in 1939, nearly a third offered courses for adults or planned to initiate programs in the immediate future. While offerings in some cases were restricted to one or two vocational courses, both Brunner and Hoskins found that the majority of schools with programs for adults offered at least some work in the field of general education.

Programs sponsored by rural schools.—From his study Hoskins was able to describe what a school program of adult education is like in the average New York community fortunate enough to have one. The school offering adult classes is typically located in a village of 1,100 people situated in a rural area of approximately one hundred square miles. About 450 pupils are enrolled in the schools of the area. Of a total school staff of twenty-five, there are eleven high-school teachers, and it is from their ranks that the teachers for the adult-education program are largely recruited. They usually serve without extra compensation.

By newspaper publicity and a series of circular letters adults in the area are informed of the classes being offered. About seventy adults, slightly more than half of them women, attend classes the first year; in the second year attendance may reach eighty; in the third year, as enthusiasm lags, it may decline. Sixty per cent of those who enrol are from the village; 40 per cent from surrounding farms. Some of the farm people are transported to school by the school bus.

Classes are held in the evening, from December to April, with about seventeen meetings in all. At each meeting there are two class sessions, each lasting from forty to fifty minutes. Even in those schools where general education courses are available, 43 per cent of the enrolment is concentrated in homemaking, agriculture,

shop work, and commercial subjects. Another third of the enrolment is in courses in health and various recreational activities. Courses in world-affairs and current problems, music, English, and drama together attract only 20 per cent of the total enrolment. A few adults may also be enrolled for miscellaneous subjects—such as art, science, psychology, religion, and French—the availability of which is subject to considerable variation from school to school.

As the above description suggests, the typical school-sponsored adult-education program is fairly formal in character. Programs vary considerably, however, and a number are extremely informal. One of the schools in the group studied by Hoskins built its entire program around meetings held in co-operation with the Farm Bureau, monthly parent-teacher association meetings, semimonthly meetings of parents of preschool children, and lectures open to the entire community. Across the continent, in California, which has long been in the forefront of adult education, Tulare has conducted an informal but highly successful week-end school every year since 1927. For six consecutive week ends four or five hundred men and women from the town and near-by ranches assemble in the afternoon to hear a lecture, usually given by a speaker from outside the community. The lecture is followed by a community supper, an entertainment period, and meetings of special interest groups, which consider such topics as current history, San Joaquin Valley history, art, literature, travel, and parent education. These meetings have gradually usurped the place of the lectures as the most highly valued phase of the program.

Tulare's week-end school is successful in large part because it is a co-operative effort of many individuals and organizations. It is not "something devised by the school authorities and offered to the people of the town." Women's organizations, the P.-T.A., churches, and civic and farm groups are all consulted in regard to the selection of speakers and the choice of subjects for discussion.

It must be remembered that only a minority of rural schools are now conducting adult-education programs of any sort, and the inadequate resources and small teaching staffs of most schools are formidable obstacles to the widespread inauguration of such programs. The programs which are available typically provide classes

in only a few subjects and are top-heavy with vocational offerings. Instruction is often thrown on the shoulders of high-school teachers with already overcrowded schedules and no preparation or flair for conducting classes for adults. Some larger rural schools have shown their ability to surmount these obstacles and provide adult-education programs which have benefited not only the enrollees but the schools themselves and the communities of which they are a part. The improvement and extension of such programs depend upon the progress of reorganization, increased provision for the preservice and in-service training of teachers of adults, and financial help from the states and the federal government for general adult education.

The adult-education program of the W.P.A.—The existence of a widespread need on the part of adults for educational opportunities was shown by their response to the W.P.A.'s education program. Established in 1933 to provide work for unemployed teachers and others qualified for teaching and to furnish educational services for those, especially in the low-income group, not being provided for by other agencies, the W.P.A. program has each year attracted an enrolment of more than one million adults. While separate data are not available on enrolment in city and country, there is abundant evidence that the program has reached large numbers of rural people. A W.P.A. program had been conducted, in at least one year, in more than half of the 140 communities surveyed by Brunner in 1936. Three-fourths of the communities in the South and the Far West had participated in the program. In one midwestern village more than fifteen hundred people were enrolled in twenty-four W.P.A. classes.

The W.P.A. designed its educational program to supplement the work of the schools and other agencies. It has largely concentrated upon adult education and nursery-school education, because it is in those fields that unmet needs are greatest. In rural areas the principal contribution of the W.P.A. has been in the field of general adult education, since vocational courses were already available in a relatively large number of places. In particular, it has done outstanding work in literacy instruction. The nation over, illiteracy has been significantly reduced as a result of the efforts of the W.P.A. Through the facilities it has provided, more than 1,300,000 people have been taught to read and write and more than 4,500,000 people have improved their ability in these basic skills. In South Carolina, a pre-

dominantly rural state, between 1933 and 1939 three-fifths of the white illiterates and nearly one-fifth of the Negro illiterates over ten years of age were taught to read and write. The W.P.A. has also provided many courses in elementary subjects for illiterates or near-illiterates. In addition, it has offered courses in health and safety education, civic education, academic subjects, and a wide variety of courses designed to enrich people's enjoyment of their leisure time. Offerings have, of course, varied by community and by year.

The W.P.A.'s adult-education program has by no means been uniformly successful. In some rural communities it has been discontinued after a trial, and in many places its effectiveness has been impaired by poor teaching, the rapid turnover of the teaching staff, administrative confusion due to frequent changes of regulations, indifference or even hostility toward the program on the part of local people, and the unco-operative attitude of school officials. Some of these impediments, however, were incidental to the newness of the program and have already been overcome to a considerable extent. In particular, better co-operative arrangements have been worked out between the W.P.A. and public school officials in most parts of the country. In a number of states the same official now supervises the state's work in adult education and the W.P.A. program.

Forums and lectures in rural areas.—In considering formal class work, the large numbers of rural adults engaging in informal educational activities are likely to be forgotten. Especially in the field of civic education a great deal of stimulation is provided through forums and lectures. The forum demonstration project conducted between 1936 and 1939 by the United States Office of Education with the co-operation of the W.P.A., state departments of public instruction, superintendents of schools (who supervise the forums locally), and various educational and lay groups was of particular value to rural people, for it proved the possibility of providing forums with competent and well-trained leaders in all but the most sparsely settled areas. In parts of the country which are predominantly rural large forum districts were established. One such district in North Carolina contained seven counties with no center of more than ten thousand population. The leader traveled from one part of the district to another on regular schedule to conduct meetings.

Many states and communities have continued with their own re-

sources the forums begun with federal help. In a number of rural communities, furthermore, forums have been launched under other auspices. Those conducted under the sponsorship of the Extension Service have already been discussed. In some places forums have also been conducted, usually with local leaders, under the sponsorship of schools, churches, community organizations, or the co-operative efforts of a number of agencies.

Lectures and discussions are customary features of the meetings of farm organizations, such as the National Grange, the Farm Bureau, and the Farmers' Educational and Co-operative Union, and the last-named organization conducts institutes for adults during the winter which last for three or four weeks. These organizations have large memberships. Approximately eight hundred thousand individuals, including men, women, and youth over fourteen, are members of the nearly eight thousand local units of the Grange. Nearly four hundred thousand families belong to the Farm Bureau, and nearly one hundred thousand families to the Farmers' Union. Lectures are also a usual part of the weekly meetings of many women's organizations and of men's luncheon clubs, which now have large numbers of chapters in rural villages. P.-T.A.'s, churches, and rural co-operatives also sponsor lectures. In the aggregate the organizations which have been mentioned supply a surprising volume of educational service; in the villages surveyed by Brunner, without considering the programs sponsored by schools, churches, or the Extension Service, on the average there were three gatherings a week with some educational feature for adults.

The radio and correspondence study.—Most rural communities are handicapped by low concentrations of population and inadequate financial resources both in finding enough local adult-education leaders and in attracting outside speakers. Because the radio and correspondence study permit them to overcome these handicaps and secure access to outside ability and talent, they are of particular value in rural education.

General educational broadcasts attract large audiences among the nine million rural families who own radios, and there are a number of programs specially designed to interest rural people. The most famous of these programs, the "National Farm and Home Hour," is

heard six days a week by approximately six million listeners. "The Hour finds a front seat for the United States farmer at all big agricultural events, keeps him posted about weather and current markets, provides him with tips from the Department of Agriculture and half a hundred other farm organizations." It varies and seasons this fare with entertainment features and important speeches.

Many of the broadcasts of state agricultural colleges are also pointed to the interests of rural people, and even their more general programs usually have a considerable following in rural areas. The possibilities of using the radio in extension teaching are well illustrated by the success of Wisconsin's "College of the Air," broadcast over the state-owned radio station, which is operated in connection with the university. Courses, running for thirty weeks, are offered in such subjects as rural problems, nature study, music appreciation, literature, and "Following Congress." Instruction is highly informal, but listeners who enrol for courses are sent study helps and given the privilege of taking examinations. Those who pass them are awarded certificates of progress. Over fourteen thousand Wisconsin people enrolled for courses in a recent year, and a far larger number followed the broadcasts regularly.

Correspondence instruction is another type of extension teaching of particular value in rural areas, where only limited educational opportunities may be available locally. As was brought out in chapter iv, in thirty-two states there are public institutions, usually state colleges, offering correspondence courses of secondary-school grade. In addition, correspondence instruction is available from a number of private commercial institutions and from the W.P.A. The W.P.A. courses, which are provided for "adults on relief or who are financially unable to avail themselves of existing educational facilities," have been particularly popular in rural areas; enrolment has been heaviest in the sparsely settled western states.

While correspondence instruction is a promising instrument of adult education, it is at present reaching only a small number of rural people and is serving them with indifferent success. Many who enrol for courses fail to complete them; in the W.P.A. program the percentage of drop-outs ranges from half to two-thirds. An analysis of the W.P.A. courses also showed that many of them had not

been sufficiently adjusted, in either style or content, to the level of intelligence, the educational achievements, and the practical objectives of prospective students, and to some extent at least the courses prepared by most other agencies share these limitations. The courses offered by private correspondence schools are often conspicuously inferior in quality and have the additional disadvantage of being costly. Furthermore, a number of private schools employ high-pressure methods to sell their courses to individuals who cannot hope to benefit from them.

The effectiveness of correspondence study is dependent to a considerable extent upon the co-operation and support of public libraries. Where local library service is not available, arrangements are sometimes made to supply enrollees with books from library extension agencies. The importance of library service in adult education generally was stressed in chapter viii. Whether individuals are studying a subject "on their own" or as members of organized groups, they cannot proceed far without the help which books and library service can provide. The extension of rural library service and increased co-operation between the library and other agencies are among the most urgent needs in the further development of rural adult education.

FURTHER NEEDS IN ADULT EDUCATION

More than any other phase of education, adult education suffers from want of co-ordination and balance, and these shortcomings are conspicuous in rural areas. Whereas the education of children has long been the special responsibility of one agency—the public school—provision for the educational needs of adults has been made belatedly and piecemeal by a number of agencies, public and private, as particular needs were recognized and it became feasible to provide for them. The consequence is that there is competition to meet certain needs, while others, equally important, go unprovided for. In rural areas vocational education has been emphasized and general education neglected, but even in the area of vocational education the needs of many rural people, especially of villagers, are receiving little or no attention. In the field of general education there are glaring deficiencies. Despite the commendable broadening of the

vocational programs sponsored by the Extension Service and other agencies and the conscientious efforts of the W.P.A. to provide educational services not otherwise available, many rural adults have no opportunity to fill gaps in their formal education, to add to their ability to cope with today's pressing social and economic problems, and to expand their capacity for appreciation of art, music, and literature. Furthermore, much of the instruction which is available is unsatisfactory in quality, given by teachers with no knack or training for dealing with adults.

A great deal can be done by the states and the nation and by rural communities to improve the present situation. Ample financial assistance from the states and the federal government is a prerequisite of any widespread expansion of facilities for general adult education. The excellence of existing programs in agriculture and home-making is proof of what can be done with such assistance. In addition to helping their local communities financially, the states themselves can do many strategic things to stimulate the development of adult education. They should assume responsibility for the stimulation of research in adult education and the improvement of facilities for the preservice and in-service training of adult-education teachers. Many of the activities which it is logical to undertake on a state basis will be of particular benefit to rural people. For example, the Regents' Inquiry recommended that New York initiate state-supported programs of correspondence and radio instruction and make additional use of itinerant teachers.

While federal and state stimulation of the entire field of adult education will tend to secure a better balance between general and vocational education, the automatic achievement of a well-balanced, well-co-ordinated program is not to be hoped for. Both the Advisory Committee and the Regents' Inquiry recognized the necessity of a single agency—in all probability a division of the department of public instruction—being designated in each state to co-ordinate its adult-education activities. At the local level, too, every effort must be made to secure well-rounded adult-education programs which meet the needs of the entire population. Every community should have an actively functioning adult-education council to co-ordinate the efforts of all agencies providing educational serv-

ice. In an area where such a council does not exist, the schools may properly take the initiative in organizing one.

A council, however, merely furnishes the machinery for a broad and integrated adult-education program. Even more essential is a widespread recognition of the value of a comprehensive program, not limited to vocational subjects. In addition to helping adults to deal more effectively with their individual problems, such a program can help them to acquire the knowledge and develop the attitudes needed for an attack on the local and national problems they face in common. Adult education is essential to the successful functioning of a democratic system in a complex and rapidly changing world. Once this fact is more fully recognized, limitations of resources will be the only important obstacle to the rapid development of a program which attempts to meet all the educational needs of the rural adult population.

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CHAPTER XIV

EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL FACILITIES FOR RURAL NEGROES

ONE-TENTH of the American people are Negroes. About three-fourths of the Negroes live in the South. Two-thirds of these southern Negroes are rural. Since virtually all northern Negroes live in cities, and the number of Negroes in the West is negligible, we are not far from the truth if we say that half of all our Negroes are rural and that practically all these are in the rural South.

The number of these rural Negroes in 1941 was about six and a half millions. They constitute one-twentieth of the total population of the nation, and one-eighth of the total rural population. In the southern region as a whole Negroes compose about one-fourth of the total population. In that region rural Negroes make up one-sixth of the total population and a little more than one-fourth of the rural population.

In Mississippi and in South Carolina nearly half of all the people are Negroes. Each of these states is very largely rural. In 1930 there were nineteen southern counties in which Negroes formed more than three-fourths of the population. Besides eight such counties in Mississippi, there were six in Alabama, two in Georgia, and one each in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Virginia. The rural Negro population is concentrated largely in a sort of crescent-shaped belt extending from Virginia to Arkansas, with its heaviest parts passing through the Gulf states. It is nearly coextensive with the Cotton Belt, and this is a fact of very great consequence, because the lives of rural Negroes are in very large part conditioned by "the shadow of the plantation," which is the system of cotton tenancy.

THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATION OF RURAL NEGROES

There are about seven hundred thousand Negro tenant families on cotton plantations. These families include a total of about three

million persons, or nearly half of all rural Negroes. Only about one-fifth of all Negro farm operators are owners or part owners of the land they cultivate. In 1930, of every 1,000 Negro farm operators, 205 were owners or part owners of the land and 793 were tenants. These included 111 cash tenants; 235 under other forms of tenancy, chiefly "share tenants" who furnished their own tools and work animals; and 447 sharecroppers who furnished nothing but labor.

The average Negro farm family consists of about four and a half persons. Typically their home is a crowded and squalid hut, their only clothing is of denim or other cheap materials, and their principal table fare is the salt pork and corn meal obtained on credit at the landlord's store in anticipation of the next cotton crop. By local custom all the financial accounting is in the hands of the landlord, and in many cases the tenant never sees any cash, because according to the books he is in debt from year to year. Ill-fed, ill-clothed, ill-housed, ill-educated, he never attains a degree of comfort sufficient to allow him to rise above a barren subsistence but spends his days in a status far lower than that of European peasantry.

This is no racial phenomenon. Only one-third of all southern cotton tenants are Negroes. Two-thirds are white, and, though there are small differentials in land values and family incomes in favor of the whites, the cotton-tenancy system pauperizes white and colored alike. Economic serfdom for the rural Negro means similar oppression for the masses of "poor whites," whose opportunities are inevitably kept down to a similar level by the economic and legal systems designed to oppress the Negro.

There is a double reason why the condition of southern rural Negroes is of great significance not merely to all the people of the South but to the entire nation. First, migration of Negroes out of the rural South and into the urban North, carrying with them their substandard economic status, education, and health, creates serious economic and cultural problems for the states and cities to which they go. Second, the development of the potentially rich southern region, which can contribute enormously to the prosperity of the nation, depends in large measure upon improvement of the education and general well-being of all its people, on the principle that all must ad-

vance together and that a chain is no stronger than its weakest link. There is no doubt that the rural Negro is the "weakest link," though obviously as a result of conditions largely beyond his control.

EVIDENCES OF PROGRESS IN THE EDUCATION OF THE NEGRO

It is still scarcely more than three-quarters of a century since the southern Negro found himself suddenly a free man without property in a region desolated and impoverished by war, downcast by defeat, and torn by interracial hatred. Then the percentage of illiteracy among American Negroes was about 95. Now it is about 15. Then there were no public schools for Negroes in the South. Today the seventeen states having segregated public school systems have two and a half million Negro children enrolled in twenty-five thousand elementary schools. They have some one hundred and sixty thousand Negro youth enrolled in two thousand schools of secondary level.

There are seventeen land-grant colleges for Negroes, one in each of the states maintaining completely segregated educational systems for the two races. There are also thirteen other state-supported Negro colleges and about seventy privately controlled institutions of higher education exclusively for colored students. From humble and incredibly poverty-stricken beginnings only a few decades ago, many of these institutions have achieved records of very great service to their race and to the nation.

For their work in agricultural and vocational education and in the related basic sciences, the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama and the Hampton Institute in Virginia are widely known. Fisk University in Nashville, an institution of high rank, has a distinguished department of social sciences headed by the noted Negro professor, Charles S. Johnson. Meharry Medical College, which adjoins the Fisk campus, and the near-by Tennessee Agricultural and Industrial State Teachers College make Nashville prominent among the four principal centers of Negro higher education in the South. Atlanta is another such center. Under the general aegis of Atlanta University a number of the city's privately controlled Negro colleges have formed increasingly close affiliations, with encouragement and financial aid from educational foundations. At New Orleans two struggling de-

nominal colleges have been merged to form Dillard University, which promises to be the spearhead of another center of Negro learning. Xavier College, a fairly large and growing Catholic institution for Indians and Negroes, is also located in New Orleans. In Washington, D.C., Howard University, a private institution supported by substantial annual appropriations from Congress, enrolls more than two thousand Negro students in its colleges of liberal arts, education, law, medicine, engineering, and other schools characteristic of a cosmopolitan university.

Large numbers of southern Negroes preparing for teaching or other professions also attend universities in the northern states, and many have distinguished themselves by their work in these institutions where no distinctions as to race are made. Edwin R. Embree says:

Pieced together bit by bit or considered in its broad statistics, the history of Negro education tells a story of progress, slow, deviating, but certain. The reduction of illiteracy . . . from 95 per cent in 1865 to less than 20 per cent in 1930, means that the various educational agencies, despite many handicaps, have wrought miracles in two brief generations. The distinction of several scores of Negro scholars and leaders and the high level of intelligence of many thousands are even more encouraging evidence of the presence and power of education.

The influence of private philanthropy.—An important segment of support and leadership in the building-up of public education for rural Negroes in the South has long come from philanthropic sources. A few of the high points are the work of the Julius Rosenwald Fund in promoting the construction of model rural school buildings, that of the John F. Slater Fund in aiding the operation of county vocational and teacher-training schools which tended to develop into regular Negro rural high schools, and that of the Anna T. Jeanes Fund in stimulating the employment of Negro supervising teachers in more than four hundred and fifty counties of the South.

The General Education Board has heavily subsidized both of these latter efforts and has directly contributed to Negro education in the South in many other ways. It has long paid the salaries of state agents for Negro rural schools, who are now attached to state departments of education in fourteen states; made substantial grants directly to numerous Negro schools and colleges; and financed many

studies of Negro life and education. Up to the end of 1940 the total gifts for Negro education from this foundation alone aggregated more than thirty-seven million dollars.

An idea of the scope of the Rosenwald Fund's work may be gained from the fact that up to July 1, 1928, this foundation had been instrumental in the erection of 4,138 Negro rural school buildings in fourteen states at a cost of more than twenty million dollars, of which about one-sixth was donated by the foundation, about one-fifth by Negro contributors, and about one-twentieth by individual white contributors, with the remainder being appropriated from public funds. The total number of buildings erected with the help of the Fund now exceeds five thousand, but the building program has been discontinued because of limitations on the life of the foundation. The Fund continues, however, to finance important studies and publications on Negro education.

The Jeanes Fund consists of one million dollars placed in trust by the donor in 1908 and still intact. Between 1908 and 1938 the total income from the Fund amounted to \$1,250,000. This sum was supplemented by nearly \$1,500,000 from other private sources and by expenditures out of tax funds by co-operating governmental units aggregating nearly three million dollars, so that more than \$5,500,000 in all was spent for salaries of Jeanes supervising teachers during the period. In 1941 there were 441 of these teachers serving in 464 rural southern counties (in a few instances one serves two counties). However, it is estimated that there are some 350 additional counties which, on the basis of the rule-of-thumb criterion that their services would be highly valuable in any county with ten or more Negro teachers, need Jeanes supervisors.

Of the money expended for the employment of Jeanes teachers, the proportion supplied from public funds shows a nearly constant rise, indicating success in the stimulation of public interest and support. In 1937 the Jeanes and Slater funds were merged to form the Southern Education Foundation, whose principal purpose is to carry on the Jeanes type of work. There is every prospect that this work will be continued indefinitely on a substantial scale despite the current reduction in the productivity of invested funds.

THE INADEQUACY OF PRESENT EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Clearly, there are encouraging evidences of progress in the education of Negroes. However, the glaring deficiencies which still exist must not be overlooked. In the same seventeen southern states where there are two and a half million Negro children enrolled in twenty-five thousand segregated elementary schools, there are also 220,000 Negro children seven to thirteen years of age, and another one hundred thousand children fourteen and fifteen years old, who are not in school. Many of these children live where no Negro school is within walking distance of their homes and where no public transportation is available.

The United States Office of Education reported that in 1930 in ten southern states 576 counties were providing school transportation for white pupils, but only 156 counties offered any such service for Negroes. The number of vehicles used for white pupils was 19,000; for Negroes, 432. The number of white pupils transported was 736,000; the number of Negro pupils, 13,000. On the transportation of white pupils \$12,500,000 was spent; on the transportation of Negroes, \$200,000. In comparing these figures, bear in mind that about one-fourth of the total population of the ten states is Negro and that in counties where segregation is required and the Negro minority is small and scattered, the per-pupil cost of making schools accessible to Negro children would be higher than the cost of making them accessible to whites.

Terms, enrolment, and attendance.—As noted in chapter ii, in the nation as a whole school terms in rural communities are generally shorter than those in urban communities. In the South the terms of schools for white pupils, even, are relatively short; and in most southern states the terms of the Negro segregated schools are markedly shorter than those of the white schools. The Advisory Committee on Education reported that in 1935-36, in the seventeen southern states and the District of Columbia, the average white pupil attended a school which remained open for 167 days, while the corresponding school term for the average Negro pupil was 146 days. In nine states one-twelfth of the white pupils, but nearly one-third of the Negroes, had school terms of less than 131 days;

3 per cent of the Negroes went to schools which stayed open 90 days or less.

The 1930 census showed that in the same region 92 per cent of the white children aged seven to fifteen were enrolled in school, while only 84 per cent of the Negro children of the same ages were enrolled. Statistics of actual days of attendance are somewhat more significant. In 1935-36 white pupils in the South attended school an average of 136 days; Negro pupils an average of 113 days. These are the lifeless figures which tell the shameful story of pupils kept at home for agricultural labor while school is in session and of pupils who live so far from school that it is impossible for them to reach it during inclement weather. Retardation is one inevitable consequence of these inequalities. A striking feature of the Negro rural schools is the "piling-up" of pupils in the lower grades. In the southern states, in 1933-34, more than 70 per cent of the Negro pupils were below the fifth grade, as compared with about 50 per cent of the white pupils. Nearly 47 per cent of the Negro pupils, but only about 28 per cent of the white pupils, were enrolled in the first two grades. As is well known, pupils retarded at this level tend to drop out of school early, with the attainment of a mere precarious literacy as their maximum educational achievement.

The education and salaries of Negro teachers.—A survey of the formal education of Negro elementary-school teachers in the seventeen southern states revealed that, in 1930-31, 23 per cent of these teachers had no formal education other than four years or less of high school; 56 per cent had from six weeks to two years in college; 21 per cent had more than two but not more than four years in college; and only 1 per cent had as much as a year of graduate work.

In 1935-36 the average annual salary of a Negro teacher in the seventeen southern states was \$510; that of a white teacher, \$833. The Negro teacher received on the average only sixty-one cents for each dollar paid to the white teacher. Statistics for the forty years of the present century show that the disparity between the salaries of white and Negro teachers increased threefold between 1900 and 1930 but that since that year it has decreased slightly. Recent developments to be discussed later in this chapter seem to promise that further progress in reducing the disparity, at least when it is based

solely on race discrimination, may be expected in the near future.

A sharper picture of the current status of the education and remuneration of Negro teachers may be had by looking at a single state of the Deep South. In Mississippi, whose population is approximately half Negro and where 55 per cent of the children of school age are Negro, the Committee on Improvement of Negro Education of the Mississippi Education Association reported in 1940 that, of the 5,930 Negro teachers employed in the state, only 600 were college graduates, only 2,300 had any education above high school, and that the average attainment of the remaining 3,000 was estimated to be less than completion of the eighth grade. For the biennium 1938-40, the committee further reported, the state board of education set up a budget providing for salaries of \$170 per year for Negro teachers, or about \$28 per month for six months. Hundreds of Negro teachers in the state were actually receiving only \$125 for an entire school year. The committee recommended that a salary schedule be developed which would take account of differences in training and type of certificate held by the teacher and approved in principle the suggestion of the Mississippi Association of Teachers in Colored Schools that the minimum pay should range from \$30 to \$60 per month "for the creation of a professional teaching body."

School plants and equipment.—The state department of education in Mississippi, in a 1934 report, showed that 1,428 of the 3,737 Negro schools in the state were housed in privately owned buildings, such as barns, lodges, tenant cabins, and churches. In such buildings school furniture was nearly always entirely lacking. Since 1934 many school buildings have been erected or repaired with the aid of the federal government through such agencies as the P.W.A. and the W.P.A., but in 1940 the Committee on Improvement of Negro Education reported that "much needs to be done in the improvement of school buildings and equipment."

The state agent for Negro education in Mississippi, reporting for 1933-35, gave a word picture more expressive than cold statistics:

In hundreds of rural schools there are just four blank, unpainted walls, a few old rickety benches, an old stove propped up on brickbats, and two or three boards nailed together and painted black for a blackboard. In many cases, this constitutes the sum total of the furniture and teaching equipment.

Because Mississippi is among the poorest of all the states and has the highest proportion of Negroes of any state, it is perhaps not surprising that conditions there are unusually bad. Throughout most parts of the South, however, one finds Negro schools which are shamefully inadequate and sharp contrasts in educational facilities for whites and Negroes.

In the ten southern states for which data are available the aggregate value of public school property reported for 1935-36 was, for white schools, \$836,301,648; for Negro schools, \$68,914,048. Negroes constituted 30 per cent of the school enrolment, but the value of Negro school property was only 8 per cent of the total.

Facilities for secondary education.—While taking comfort from the fact that by 1935 there were about two thousand Negro secondary schools in the South, enrolling approximately 160,000 pupils, we must note that at the same time there were four states—Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, and Mississippi—where only about 10 per cent of the Negro population of high-school age was in school. In 1932 there were in fifteen southern states 230 counties, with a population of 159,000 Negroes fifteen to nineteen years of age, which had no high schools for colored pupils within their boundaries. In the same states there were 195 other counties, with 200,000 Negroes of high-school age, which had no four-year high schools for Negroes. In each of these 425 counties the Negro population was at least one-eighth of the total, and in some it was more than half.

“It is in rural areas, primarily, that Negroes fail to share the benefits of public secondary education,” says Doxey A. Wilkerson in his report for the Advisory Committee on Education. He had just shown that in 1933-34 in the southern states 55 per cent of the white children of high-school age were in school, as contrasted with 19 per cent of the Negro children of the same age and, further, that, although Negroes constituted 24 per cent of the total rural population in those states, they formed only 4 per cent of the rural high-school enrolment. The fact that only 7 per cent of the rural high schools were Negro schools suggests strongly that inaccessibility was a large factor in the situation.

In 1939 Mississippi had 115,000 Negro children of high-school age. In the whole state there were only fifteen Negro high schools approved by the regional association of secondary schools and colleges.

There were eleven others on probation, thirty-two four-year high schools approved only by the state department of education, fifteen three-year high schools, eighteen two-year high schools, and five one-year high schools. All these schools together enrolled only 9,072 pupils, or less than 8 per cent of the Negro population of high-school age. The number of graduates in 1939 was only 1,140. Twenty-five of the eighty-two counties of the state had no recognized high-school facilities for Negro youth.

Over-all financial support of education for Negroes.—The disparities in expenditures for the operation of white and colored schools have often been publicized and can be summarized briefly. In 1935-36 ten southern states spent \$183,060,890 for current expenses in public elementary and secondary schools, of which \$21,615,513 was spent for Negro schools. Negroes constituted 28 per cent of the total enrolment in these states, but only 12 per cent of the total expenditures went for Negro schools. In the ten states, in the 1935-36 school year, the average current expenditure per white pupil was \$37.87; per colored pupil, \$13.09. On the average, for every dollar spent for a white pupil thirty-five cents was spent for a Negro pupil. In Georgia, South Carolina, and Mississippi the average expenditure per Negro pupil amounted to only twenty cents for each dollar spent per white pupil.

Total expenditures for schools in Mississippi for 1937-38 were for white schools \$10,982,026.08; for colored schools, \$1,419,263.02. Thus 55 per cent of the children of the state (the Negro children) were beneficiaries of only 11.4 per cent of the total school revenues. The expenditure per child was \$28.90 for white children and \$3.06 for colored children. For each dollar spent for a Negro child in the state, \$9.44 was spent for a white child. In one county \$41.57 was spent for each white child for each dollar spent for a Negro child.

In 1937-38, however, Mississippi's expenditures for Negro education were \$126,240.96 more than in the preceding year. Between 1936 and 1938 fifty of the eighty-two counties showed gains in expenditures for Negro education. Reporting these facts, the Committee on Improvement of Negro Education recorded its gratification at the trend and recommended continued increases in the support of Negro schools.

Vocational education for Negroes.—In earlier chapters it has been

noted that in the southern states Negroes participate in the federally aided program of vocational education. They are not served, however, to the extent warranted by their numbers and their needs. The Advisory Committee on Education found that, although on account of their depressed economic condition in a competitive world Negroes have greater need for vocational education than have whites, their opportunities for participating in the federally aided vocational education program in the southern states are only about two-thirds as extensive as would be the case if opportunities were available on an equitable basis to both races.

The disparity is even greater when measured by a comparison of the amounts of federal funds expended for vocational education for the two races. In 1934-35 Negro schools received only about one-half of their proportionate share of the federal funds allocated to the southern states for the teaching of agriculture, less than one-half for home economics, and less than one-third for instruction in trades and industry. Negro teachers of these classes received from federal funds only about forty-five cents for each dollar received by white teachers in similar programs. A substantial part of the federal vocational funds allotted to the southern states on the basis of their Negro population is habitually diverted from Negro schools.

This fact explains why all recent bills introduced into Congress to provide federal aid to the states for general education have contained a provision requiring that wherever segregated schools are maintained for whites and Negroes, federal funds shall be apportioned in accordance with the respective numbers of the two races in the population. Such a provision is sound and just and should be adopted and enforced in the allocation of federal funds for vocational education.

REALISM IN EDUCATION FOR RURAL NEGROES

The handicaps to Negro rural education which have just been sketched, serious though they are, are by no means the only ones which must be mentioned. Equally pernicious is the general failure of the curriculum and methods of Negro schools to achieve vital connections with the current or future conditions of living their pupils must face. Education in schools for southern rural Negroes is often completely lacking in realism.

For the most part it fails to take into account the fact that the Negro's status as a member of a minority race subjected to numerous castelike distinctions affects his whole problem of adjusting to life from childhood upward, making it necessary for him to develop a set of accommodative techniques by which he can get along well in his local situation as it is. The acquisition of these techniques is one of the most important elements in the education of a southern Negro; yet rarely, if ever, does it receive any systematic attention in the elementary or secondary schools. Instead of dealing with the history of interracial relations and analyzing the problems arising from the presence of two races in the state and in the community, the curriculum in the Negro school usually ignores these matters entirely. Indeed, it generally ignores all the conditions under which Negroes live in favor of a pointless attempt to duplicate the courses of study offered by schools for middle-class white children. There is danger—which must be guarded against—that the revision of the curriculum of Negro schools might in some places be perverted to deny Negro pupils equality of educational opportunity, including the opportunity to prepare themselves for college. Yet it is clear that Negro pupils have certain special educational needs and that the subjects they should study in common with white pupils must be presented from the point of view of their background and interests to have meaning and value.

The disjunction between the social and economic status of the Negro and the type of instruction offered him in school has been forcefully pointed out by Horace Mann Bond and Charles S. Johnson, distinguished Negro educators, as well as by white students of education for Negroes. A principal source of the difficulty is that Negro schools generally follow a standard educational stereotype based on the theory of an equalitarian population free from caste and class distinction, which is far from the fact of a population sharply divided, as it is in the southern states, both by racial caste and by economic class.

These states prescribe courses of study and textbooks for rural elementary schools on a state-wide basis. There is also a tendency toward state-wide uniformity of the content and method of testing by which expected rates of progress are measured. All these matters are formulated with the white population primarily in mind, and

more often than not they are better suited to urban than to rural pupils. It has been aptly said that the standardization of the elementary school in method and content on the presumption that it is for children of middle-class urban families or the sons and daughters of farmowners makes nonsense in the face of a large rural population of Negro children from the families of sharecroppers, whose homes are the most disadvantaged, culturally and economically, of any in America.

Pupils from these homes come to school irregularly for short terms. The elder members of their families are often illiterate. They have had none of the benefit of those environmental factors and resources which are conducive to a receptive readiness for schooling. Yet they are expected to progress through the same subject matter and through the same hierarchy of grades as are the children of middle-class white families. The disjunction between the school curriculum and their lives not only leads to a large amount of retardation, as has been mentioned, but hampers the learning of Negro pupils in innumerable other ways. The books that they read are often imperfectly understood and so unrealistic as to be nearly meaningless. Many Negro pupils reach the seventh grade, for example, with only a fourth-grade reading ability. The consequence is that the textbooks of the seventh grade are only partially intelligible. Often there seems to be no point in attempting to understand them in any case. Even when they deal with such a subject as health, they remain abstract and discuss problems which are for the most part far removed from the daily conditions of hygiene and sanitation under which rural Negro children live. In most health texts and in most courses in health and hygiene, little emphasis is placed upon the consequences of a complete lack of indoor and outdoor toilet facilities; the venereal diseases, and methods for their prevention and treatment, are usually unmentioned; even the essentials of proper nutrition are presented in technical terms beyond the comprehension of the disadvantaged rural child. The shortcomings of the texts and courses of study of most of the other subjects in the Negro school curriculum are correspondingly serious.

One reason why standardization on the basis of a stereotype bearing little relation to the conditions under which the pupils live is

more general among Negro schools than among white schools is that the introduction of new experimental curriculums and teaching procedures is confined almost exclusively to the latter. The Negro school system is everywhere the smaller of the two systems and, as has been seen, is almost everywhere operated on much the more meager financial basis. These circumstances tend strongly to inhibit the innovations and variations which are essential to vigorous life and progress in any system. They handicap Negro schools not only at the elementary level but also at the secondary and higher levels, although they have not prevented a number of schools from developing excellent programs, as we shall see.

Realistic approaches—the work of the Penn School.—In the words of the Advisory Committee on Education in the British Colonies, quoted by an eminent American student of rural education for Negro people,

experience of the education of rural communities in different countries tends to show that efforts to educate the young are often largely wasted unless a simultaneous effort is made to improve the life of the community as a whole. . . . Poverty, malnutrition, insanitary conditions and habits, ignorance, superstitious beliefs, hampering traditions, defects in social organizations, are all interdependent factors, no one of which can be dealt with effectively in isolation.

Fortunately, a few excellent examples of the integration of a rural Negro school with its community may be found in the South. Notable is the work of the Penn School, a private institution on the island of St. Helena in South Carolina, where only about twenty-five families in a population of about five thousand are white. The Penn School interests itself in every phase of the social and economic life of the island as well as in the development of its pupils. It is a true community school, used by adults and children for instructional, civic, and recreational activities, and making use of the farms and homes of the people as part of the training ground for the school. There is no hard-and-fast distinction between school and community. Some of the high-school boys work on special projects on the school farm; others carry on projects in co-operation with their parents on their home farms. Academic as well as agriculture teachers visit pupils' home farms, and the two farmers' fairs—one for adults, one for youth—held during the autumn are regarded as educational

events. The school works closely with the St. Helena Co-operative Society and Credit Union, through which the islanders have acquired a community tractor, a sweet-potato curing house, and a tomato-packing plant.

The teaching staff of the Penn School is composed entirely of Negroes—six in the elementary school, five in the high school, twelve in the industrial and agriculture departments, and five community workers, including a librarian, a farm-demonstration agent, a home-demonstration agent, and a nurse. The number of pupils is slightly above six hundred.

So successful has the school been in making education realistic and connecting it with the problems of the community and its people that it is now used as a demonstration center in the training of rural teachers by the South Carolina State Department of Education and the State College for Negroes. Students in the college who expect to become teachers in rural Negro schools spend twelve weeks on the island studying its life and problems and the role of the Penn School. This arrangement was facilitated at its inception in 1936 by a modest grant from the General Education Board which enabled the Penn School to provide housing facilities and transportation for the college students and also covered the salary of the special teacher who was put in charge of the teacher-training work.

The efforts of Negro teacher-education institutions.—In other places, too, attempts are being made to secure needed changes in the viewpoint and programs of Negro rural schools through better programs for the preparation of teachers. The Louisiana Normal and Industrial Institute is developing a promising program which combines teacher education, curriculum development, and supervision. A field service unit, composed of faculty members and advanced students, visits rural communities periodically to assist them in organizing to meet their social needs and to co-operate with supervisors in the in-service education of rural teachers. In addition to giving students the best possible orientation to the conditions they will face as teachers and to practical means of effecting improvements, the firsthand contact with the rural communities of the states provides a sound basis for the preparation of useful, realistic curriculum material.

A number of Negro teacher-education institutions have developed

less ambitious programs for making prospective teachers aware of the needs and backgrounds of their future pupils. It is becoming more common for such institutions to "adopt" a small rural school not too far from the campus to be used as a demonstration center. In some cases the school is used only for practice teaching, but in a growing number of instances the needs of the community the school serves are studied, and faculty members and students work with the adults of the community to improve it.

Here and there Negro teacher-education institutions are also recognizing the possibilities of securing better schools through skilful training of teachers now in service. A few years ago the Agricultural, Mechanical, and Normal College at Pine Bluff, Arkansas, invited a group of twenty carefully selected Negro teachers of small rural schools in different counties to take a special summer course of ten weeks. In addition to regular formal instruction in rural education, these teachers were given actual manual experience in simple industrial arts, including the construction and staining of useful objects of wood and the making of stains at low cost by the use of oil and tar. They also received instruction in music especially adapted to the rural school in which there is no piano. They learned to use the harmonica and to make music from glass tumblers. They were given instruction in the descriptive botany of the region, enabling them to recognize the varieties of trees and wild flowers. The librarian of the college instructed them in the selection of books for children and in the care and use of rural school libraries. The whole experience was a happy and exhilarating one. The teachers who were fortunate enough to obtain it could scarcely go back to their schools and continue the dull and uninspired grind of rote learning which is characteristic of most rural schools. The state department of education has made arrangements to observe and report the changes in the conduct of the schools in charge of the twenty teachers who composed the group.

If the Negro rural school is to play an important part in the upgrading of the condition of Negroes, it must not ignore the social and economic conditions of present-day rural communities. The force of this statement is fortunately becoming more widely recognized, but we are far short of the point where its full possibilities will be realized.

ADULT EDUCATION AND OTHER SOCIAL AND
EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

The improvement of Negro rural schools depends in large part upon the improvement of the communities they serve. It is obviously related to the amelioration of the Negro's economic situation; the close connection between educational and economic conditions has been alluded to many times in this report. It is also bound up with the progress of adult education, the adequacy of library facilities, health conditions, and recreational opportunities. Clearly the school must make the maximum contribution its resources permit in all these areas, and it has a vital interest in the work of other agencies.

The number of agencies seeking to improve one or another phase of the social and economic life of Negroes is, of course, very great. Here we shall be able to observe only briefly the extent to which the rural Negroes of the South are served by a few of the principal agencies.

The agricultural extension program.—Southern rural Negroes are not served in proportion to their numbers as fully as are southern white rural dwellers by the various activities of the Co-operative Agricultural Extension Service. Two measures are available: the number of extension agents of each race and the proportions in which extension funds are devoted to work with Negroes. In 1937 sixteen southern states had 3,735 extension agents, of whom 449 were Negroes. Although Negroes comprised approximately 24 per cent of the farm operators in those states, extension agents of their race comprised only 12 per cent of the force of the Extension Service. While it is true that Negroes benefit to some degree from the work of white extension workers, it is general practice for Negro clients to be served by Negro agents, so that the service to Negro farmers in these states was available on only about one-half as ample a basis as their numbers warranted.

Federal funds for extension work in the South are received and administered almost exclusively by the white land-grant colleges. Nearly two-thirds of the financial support of the whole program in the South comes from federal sources. Data furnished by the Extension Service in 1937 indicated that, of a total expenditure of more

than thirteen million dollars in sixteen southern states during the fiscal year, only about eight hundred thousand dollars was spent for work among Negroes. In these states, though 24 per cent of the rural population was colored, only 6 per cent of the total expenditures for extension work was devoted to work with colored people. This disproportion is shown to have remained fairly constant for a dozen years and plainly indicates a need for revision of the basic federal statutes.

After analyzing the situation, Doxey A. Wilkerson recommended that for the sake of preserving unity in the administration of state programs it would probably be well not to insist upon a division of the federal funds between the white and colored land-grant colleges. Instead he would have federal statutes require the funds to be expended by the administering institutions according to an equitable division between programs for the white and Negro populations. He would also condition the federal grants upon the maintenance of state and local expenditures for work with Negroes at a proportion at least as great as in a specified recent year, so that there would be no possibility of increased discrimination.

Considerable progress toward a more equitable allocation of extension funds is possible without new federal legislation, Wilkerson pointed out. The secretary of agriculture is in a position to exert great influence by virtue of his authority to approve state plans for the administration of extension funds. It was also noted that the Department of Agriculture could call attention to the discriminations which exist by presenting separate information for the white and Negro populations in its statistical and reporting activities in connection with the Extension Service.

The W.P.A.'s adult-education program.—One of the major objectives of the W.P.A.'s adult-education program, already discussed in chapter xiii, has been to reduce illiteracy, and its efforts in this direction have been of great benefit to Negroes, among whom the inability to read and write is still distressingly common. It is estimated that between 1933 and 1940 upward of a half-million Negroes over sixteen years of age were enabled to attain basic literacy as a result of the operation of the W.P.A. program. In this short span of time illiteracy among adult Negroes was reduced approximately 30 per cent.

In one southern county 118 W.P.A. adult-education classes were organized for Negro illiterates. Classes met on the average for sixty sessions. Nine out of ten of the 2,732 Negro illiterates in the county were through this program taught to read and write—at a total cost of only \$5,500.

While literacy instruction has dominated the W.P.A.'s adult-education work with Negroes, other types of classes have attracted an attendance of more than three hundred thousand. Many of these classes have attempted to improve the employability of those in attendance by giving instruction in such fields as beauty culture, plain sewing, gardening, poultry farming, automobile mechanics, household service, and typing. Partly in order to improve the caliber of its own instructional work, the W.P.A. has also sponsored many regional conferences and institutes for the training of Negro teachers for adult classes—a service which is not generally provided in Negro institutions of higher education.

For several years the W.P.A. has operated about 150 nursery-school units for Negroes, providing needed training in hygiene and giving proper nutrition to many thousands of neglected Negro children as well as giving incidental instruction to their parents in the principles of child care and improved family and community relationships. Many of the adult classes for Negroes have emphasized health education, and often they have been instrumental in starting preliminary local organizations which have initiated important and permanent local advances in public health. Still other classes have emphasized social and civic education and the cultural interests of the Negro. Classes have been held in Negro history, Negro literature, Negro music, and other subjects bearing on Negro life. So that Negroes will feel a wholesome pride in the accomplishments of their race, "Negro History Week" is observed with programs emphasizing the achievements of prominent Negro men and women. A great deal of free and inexpensive teaching and reading material on various aspects of Negro life has also been prepared and circulated under W.P.A. sponsorship. According to James A. Atkins, specialist in Negro education for the W.P.A., one of the most important outcomes of the agency's adult-education program for Negroes is the improvement it has brought about in interracial understanding. As a result

of the operation of the program many white people have learned more about Negro life and acquired a deeper interest in the educational problems of the Negroes. Atkins observes with gratification that a growing liberalism in the South enables the races to work together toward improvement of Negro education. There is, indeed, ample evidence to support his belief that a sincere and aggressive desire for the betterment of the condition of Negroes is spreading rapidly among leading white southerners.

Library facilities for Negroes.—The American Library Association reported that, in 1935, 83 per cent of all Negroes in the South were without access to public-libraries. In the provision of library service, as in the schools, racial segregation is practiced, making it necessary to maintain separate facilities for the two races and sharply increasing the cost of furnishing service. The disparities between the available library service for whites and Negroes are even greater than the disparities in school facilities. A number of factors account for this situation. There is still considerable feeling in the South that book learning is not for Negroes. The maintenance of libraries is not mandatory but is merely permissive for the local authorities. State financial aid for libraries is much less common than similar aid for schools, and the state's responsibility for the training of librarians is not so widely accepted as its responsibility for the training of teachers.

Some encouraging demonstrations in the provision of library service have been made by philanthropic agencies. Since 1929 the Julius Rosenwald Fund has assisted demonstration libraries in eleven southern counties, each of which is organized to provide service for all the people of the county, including whites and Negroes, urban and rural, in school and out. The Rosenwald Fund has also assisted in establishing in Negro schools some two thousand special school libraries, having some two hundred thousand volumes obtained at a total cost of about \$165,000. There are promising beginnings of a profession of trained librarianship among Negroes. The Library School of Hampton Institute has trained more than one hundred librarians now serving in southern libraries and in Negro institutions of higher education.

Examples of good results obtained by legal steps to assure fairness

PRINCIPLES WHICH SHOULD GOVERN NEGRO EDUCATION

As Formulated by a Committee of Southern Educators

Within these eighty years there have been periods when [the] people [of the southern states] were in dire straits economically. . . . Our vision was not always clear. When there was so little to divide perhaps it was not always easy to divide what we possessed in public funds fairly equally among all the people of both races.

Now we are in a much better economic condition, and while we are still below some other sections of the country in wealth and general development, we have made remarkable progress in education, health and general welfare. Also at this time in our development our attention has been called to conditions in the education among the Negroes of the South in language which cannot be misunderstood. Therefore as your committee we present the following:

1. That the Negroes are American citizens and are entitled to the rights, privileges and obligations that inhere under the Constitution of the United States.
2. That the process of education for Negroes should be so directed as to develop his highest economic, physical, educational and cultural value to himself and to society.
3. That the democratic way of life is based on a Christian concept of civilization, and education for Negroes should be so organized as to magnify the value of the individual and to develop in him a consciousness of the dignity and importance of personality, just as is true of all other American citizens.
4. That educational facilities and opportunities and compensation based on equal qualifications and opportunities should be provided to the end that ultimately all discriminations as affect either the majority or the minority groups shall be removed.

—From "Education of Negroes in the South: Preliminary Reports of the Committee on This Subject Working with the Southern States Work Conference on School Administrative Problems, June 2-13, 1941, Daytona Beach, Florida"

to Negroes in library service are observable in two southern states. West Virginia requires all libraries receiving public funds to give service to Negroes, and in Texas the county free libraries are directed to provide branch service for Negroes. Of all public libraries serving Negroes in thirteen southern states in 1935, over one-third were located in these two states.

Health conditions and recreational facilities.—According to preliminary United States Life Tables for 1930-39, a white male living at the age of twenty had a total life-expectancy of sixty-four years. For a white female of the same age, the expected life-span was seventy years. The corresponding figures for nonwhite males and females were, respectively, fifty-eight and sixty years. The death rate from influenza and pneumonia for the years 1931-35 was twice as high among colored persons as among whites. In the fifteen- to thirty-four-year age span it was three times as high. For the twenty-five-year period 1911-35 the tuberculosis death rate for Negroes was, among males, nearly twice that for whites and, among females, more than two and a half times that for whites. For boys and girls between the ages of ten and fourteen the Negro death rate from tuberculosis was ten times higher than that for whites.

Incomplete data indicate that the death rate from syphilis among Negroes is about five times as high as among white persons. The rate of maternal mortality among Negro women is nearly twice as high as among white women. The sickness and death rates from pellagra, hookworm disease, typhoid, malarial fevers, and a number of other diseases are markedly higher among Negroes than among whites.

It is generally recognized that the unsatisfactory health conditions among Negroes are due largely to environmental factors and are not the result of any inherent racial weaknesses. The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company puts the matter plainly in one of its reports:

It is not difficult to see some reasons why mortality is higher among colored than among white persons. Generally speaking, the colored population is at a disadvantage economically, and as usual this also brings with it the disadvantage of greater exposure to industrial risks, quite aside from the lower level of living.

Nowhere is it more apparent than in connection with health that the welfare of the Negro affects the entire population. As Edwin R.

Embree has remarked, the germs of communicable diseases "recognize no color line, obey no Jim Crow laws." Disease goes hand in hand with poverty, ignorance, and the absence of economic or educational opportunities in communities of either race. The way to eradicate a disease is to attack it whenever it is found. Tuberculosis, the venereal diseases, and other surviving scourges will not receive their deathblows until they are driven out of their present stronghold among underprivileged Negroes. Not only are more adequate medical measures required; it is equally essential to eliminate substandard housing, unbalanced diets, inadequate clothing, and ignorance of the rudiments of sanitation. Rural schools can and should participate in the attack on these causes of disease.

Suitable recreational activities are intimately connected both with the building of physical and mental health and with the raising of general cultural standards. An incredible dearth of opportunity for wholesome and constructive use of leisure time confronts the rural Negro. Charles S. Johnson, in his study of Negro youth in eight southern rural counties for the American Youth Commission, concluded that

the narrow discipline and inadequacy of the rural school, the traditional and cramping conservatism of the rural church, the restricting and ever present shadow of the white world with its limited tolerance, and the relentless economic demands on youth of lowly status, combine to restrict this outlet.

The village "juke-joint," or commercialized honky-tonk, is the resort of those who are most aggressive in seeking diversions to relieve tedium. Sexual laxity which would be curbed by arrests in an urban environment is tolerated in the rural social setting. Significant improvement in the situation, as Johnson points out, depends in large part upon the provision of wholesome social and recreational opportunities. Existing conditions are a challenge to the school and other agencies concerned with building a better rural life.

BARRIERS TO PROGRESS

That formidable obstacles stand in the way of rapid improvement of education for rural Negroes is manifest. In addition to the numerous hard facts of the situation which have already been noted, we may observe that from 1929 to 1933 the average per capita income

in the Northeast was \$681, while in the South it was \$252. For the rural South exclusively it was, of course, even lower. By any economic index the South is a chronically depressed area. Yet—with one-sixth of the nation's school revenues—the South must support schools and other public services for one-third of the nation's children. Within the South there are extreme differences between urban and rural communities both in income and in number of dependents. In the southeastern states more than four dollars is available to pay for the schooling of nonfarm children for every one dollar available for the education of boys and girls from farms.

Rural Negroes are concentrated in this poor section of the country as members of an economically submerged minority race, habitually kept in a status of disadvantage by the dominant majority. Segregation of the races for educational purposes requires the maintenance of a double school system, greatly augmenting the total cost and increasing the natural difficulties in making schools accessible to all rural children and youth. As has been seen, there is a lamentable lack of realism in the curriculum content and teaching methods in most Negro rural schools. Within the Negro group, notably among the clergy, many of the individuals who are in a position to promote progress have themselves had such limited educational advantages that they are unable to rise to their real opportunities and responsibilities as community leaders.

In any catalogue of the conditions blocking improvement account must also be taken of the psychological repercussions of discrimination upon Negroes. A thousand-odd indignities go with the segregation of the races in public conveyances and in hotels, restaurants, and places of amusement. These and countless other forms of discrimination, together with the overbearing attitudes assumed by some white persons, press in upon the consciousness of the Negro child and adolescent the knowledge that the color of his skin, a matter beyond his control, closely limits his possibilities of achievement and enjoyment in nearly every aspect of human endeavor. Often the realization of his position either depresses the morale of the young Negro to the point of dull resignation or incites him to foolhardy aggression which only serves to perpetuate the prejudices against which it is aimed. The bright ray in the gloom is the fact that two generations

have witnessed marked improvement in interracial relations, and the trend is one which tends to gather momentum with the lapse of time.

SOME PRACTICABLE POSSIBILITIES OF IMPROVEMENT

The barriers to progress which have been sketched severely limit the possibilities of accomplishment in the immediate future. However, there are many possible means by which those barriers may be eventually surmounted or circumvented. Some of the possibilities have already been observed earlier in this chapter. Others remain to be noticed here.

Policies of federal agencies toward the Negro.—The policies of federal agencies exert some influence upon the treatment of Negroes throughout the nation and directly determine the amount of assistance they receive from some extremely important programs. Generally speaking, the federal authorities charged with the administration of emergency agencies having educational programs, such as the W.P.A., the N.Y.A., and the C.C.C., have taken care to see that Negroes receive at least a proportionate share of the benefits offered. A spirit of aggressive determination that the Negro be equitably treated has also characterized the activities of the Tennessee Valley Authority, whose operations blanket a considerable portion of the rural South. It has adopted a policy of employing Negroes in proportion to their numbers in the population of the locality concerned and of giving them the same housing, the same training, and the same pay for equivalent work as its white employees. This policy has met with very little local opposition and has served to demonstrate in many places that a community can raise its whole level of well-being far more rapidly by looking to decent opportunities for all its people than by seeking to degrade its colored population.

In its provisions for education and library service for its own employees and in its efforts to improve school and library facilities in the areas it serves, the T.V.A. has established co-operative relations with Negro institutions of higher education as well as with white institutions and has devoted proportionately as much attention to the needs of Negroes as to the needs of whites. The area around Huntsville, Alabama, furnishes a typical example of its educational activities for Negroes. Here Negro employees of the training division of the T.V.A. succeeded in inaugurating a community improve-

ment program for the local colored population by drawing into cooperation the State Agricultural and Mechanical Institute and the county boards of education in three adjacent counties. Many of the local public schools for Negroes have become active centers of community betterment. Their programs have taken root, and there is every prospect that they will continue even after T.V.A. stimulation ceases.

As has been noted, under some of the older permanent educational programs which are subsidized by the federal government through grants to the states, Negroes have not in all cases been served to the extent their needs and numbers warrant. However, the Advisory Committee on Education has called attention to the necessity for a more equitable division of federal grants for both Extension Service work and agricultural research. Recently many departments and bureaus of the federal government dealing with different facets of human welfare have added to their staffs professional advisers on Negro affairs or line subdivisions charged with the direct management of their services for Negroes. In the summer of 1941 the President of the United States issued an executive order directing that discriminations based on race and color alone, and not justifiable on other bona fide grounds, should not be made to prevent Negroes from assuming their full proportionate share in the various military and civil aspects of the national defense effort.

Federal aid to the states for general education.—By all odds the most essential fiscal measure for the improvement of Negro education is the inauguration of regular annual federal appropriations to the states for general educational purposes. Poor as their present facilities for public education are, as a group the southern states are spending for education a larger proportion of their state and local revenue than the average state. The deficiencies which have been pointed to at many places in this report exist despite a greater than average effort to support their schools. Tax experts have demonstrated, too, that even if the poorest southern states had the best possible taxing systems which can now be devised, and devoted all their public revenues to education, they would still be unable to support schools as liberally as do several of the more fortunate states in the North and West.

The federal funds should go to the states in proportion to their

relative educational loads and their relative financial needs, as determined by objective indices available from the Bureau of the Census and other sources. The southern states would receive relatively large allotments, because the proportion of children and youth in their populations is relatively high and because their taxable resources per capita are low. To insure that the benefits would go to Negroes in equitable proportion, it would only be necessary to condition the grants upon the requirement that the money be used for the two races in proportion to their numbers in the population and to add the further safeguard that the expenditures of state and local funds for Negro education must not be diminished below the level of the preceding fiscal year.

It might also be well to stipulate that the beneficiary states should keep schools open to all children of school age for a specified minimum term, such as 160 days per year. With the exception of these broad safeguards, the federal legislative and administrative authorities should hold to the policy of noninterference in the control of state and local school systems.

What the states can do.—Even with the necessary financial resources in hand, the problems of policy-making and administration would still remain a responsibility of the states. Compulsory school-attendance laws would have to be revamped and much more efficiently enforced than is now generally the case. State-wide systems of adult education and of library service would have to be built almost from scratch. New buildings and transportation routes would have to be planned. As a committee of southern educators has recently pointed out, the states would have to examine and if necessary revise their plans for the distribution of vocational funds in order more adequately to meet the needs of their Negro populations.

Reasonable and practicable schemes of bringing the salaries of white and Negro teachers into equitable relationship would have to be put into operation. In this connection it is noteworthy that in 1941 the North Carolina legislature made a substantial special appropriation for the next two years for that specific purpose. No doubt this action was motivated in part by the decision of a federal district court in Maryland and the decision of a federal circuit court of appeals in a Virginia case, both to the effect that a salary discrimi-

nation based on race alone, as between two teachers holding equivalent credentials and performing substantially similar duties, is a violation of that part of the Fourteenth Amendment which proclaims that no state shall deprive any person within its jurisdiction of the equal protection of the laws. The United States Supreme Court refused to review this finding, and accordingly it stands as the law of the land, imposing a solemn obligation on those states which maintain segregated schools.

Improving the curriculum.—The task of reconstructing the content and method of teaching in Negro schools would also rest upon the shoulders of the states and their school subdivisions, with only informational and advisory aid from federal sources and from non-governmental bodies. As has been said, it is necessary to supplant rote learning by meaningful community work in the social studies and to connect health instruction with home environment. It is equally necessary to teach constructive use of leisure time and the rudiments of recreational leadership and to devise and make available realistic vocational education and guidance fitted to the economic level on which the individual Negro pupil is likely to find himself.

There are many other needs. The Committee on Improvement of Negro Education noted in its 1940 report: "In schools for Negroes, the study of the achievements and origins of the Negro will help to give the Negro the self-respect which makes for racial integrity and personal achievement." The desirability of such study is widely recognized by white and colored leaders, and a considerable body of suitable materials is already available. In January, 1940, the Conference on Education and Race Relations issued from its headquarters in Atlanta the eighteenth edition of its bulletin, *America's Tenth Man: A Brief Survey of the Negro's Part in American History*. It contains authentic and inspiring sketches of the work and achievements of Negroes from the day of Alonzo Pietro, the Negro pilot of the "Niña," one of Christopher Columbus' ships, to the day of George Carver, who still carries on at an advanced age his notable work in chemistry at Tuskegee Institute, and whose discoveries have produced inestimable benefits to the South and to the nation. The Commission on Interracial Co-operation, at the same headquarters

in Atlanta, issues a series of pamphlets of Negro poetry and songs and studies of various problems of the Negro and of the South.

Noteworthy, too, is the work of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, with headquarters in Washington, D.C. Established in 1915, and now headed by the veteran Negro scholar and editor, Carter G. Woodson, it has for a quarter of a century published the quarterly *Journal of Negro History*, and issues also a monthly *Negro History Bulletin*, suitable for popular reading and for use in elementary and secondary schools. The association has also published some thirty substantial and scholarly books on various aspects of Negro life and culture. A newer and smaller organization which is preparing and publishing materials on the Negro for the use of adult education groups is the Associates in Negro Folk Education, headed by Professor Alain Locke of Howard University.

Strengthening southern institutions of higher education for Negroes.—Only a few of the 117 Negro institutions of higher education in the United States have won favorable recognition by the regional or national accrediting associations. Publicly supported higher education for Negroes centers chiefly in the seventeen land-grant colleges. These are generally less than one-fifth as large as the corresponding institutions for white students, and their programs are far less diversified. The proportion of the white population of college age attending publicly supported institutions of higher education is about five times the proportion of the Negro population attending similar institutions. The Negro land-grant colleges regularly get far less than a proportionate share of state appropriations for higher education and less than an equitable fraction of federal grants under the several federal acts, with the exception only of the Morrill-Nelson Act and the Bankhead-Jones Act, which require division between the two races in proportion to their respective numbers. Though federal and state funds for extension work should be disbursed through the white land-grant colleges for the sake of unified administration, certainly the Negro institutions should receive their full proportionate share of all federal and state funds destined for the support of resident instruction.

Graduate and professional instruction for Negroes in the South is virtually nonexistent except in five privately controlled universities.

Its absence in the state institutions for Negroes has recently given rise to litigation in which both the Maryland Court of Appeals and the United States Supreme Court (in a Missouri case) have held that the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, guaranteeing equal protection of the laws, obligates every state to make available within its own borders, to qualified Negro applicants, facilities for graduate or professional instruction equivalent to those it offers to white students. Mr. Chief Justice Hughes expressly declared that the practice of offering to pay the tuition fees of qualified Negro residents who must go outside the state to obtain instruction does not meet the requirements of the law. These decisions, though landmarks in the history of justice between man and man, may have unfortunate practical effects if they stimulate the southern states hastily to improvise jerry-built graduate and professional schools for Negroes at a time when neither the volume of demand nor the available financial resources justifies their establishment.

One arrangement recommended by educators for making graduate and professional instruction available to Negroes is the regional plan, whereby both public and private resources would be concentrated on the building-up of not more than five regional centers, each consisting of a leading institution or a cluster of neighboring institutions capable of offering a comprehensive program at the graduate and professional level. This plan has already won substantial and continuing philanthropic support, and there is evidence that wise southern Negro leaders may continue to favor it rather than urge qualified students of their race to insist upon an immediate literal interpretation of their rights under the recent decision of the Supreme Court, in states where this is construed to necessitate the opening of a congeries of new state-supported graduate and professional schools for Negroes. The voluntary use of such regional centers of graduate instruction may be fostered by the policy of the National Youth Administration in setting aside annually a special fund of some seventy-five thousand dollars to be used in part to provide student work for Negro college and graduate students who attend institutions outside their home states.

However the end is achieved, it is urgent that competent Negro students be afforded facilities through which they may initiate and

conduct research on the special problems faced by their race. In several places, notably in the department of social sciences at Fisk University, it has already been demonstrated that such activity pays large dividends in many ways. It builds up the confidence, self-respect, and research skill of students and instructors; and it produces and diffuses knowledge from which flow great benefits to all Negro people and to the nation as a whole.

AUTHORITIES FOR THE FACTS

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Ira DeA Reid, *In a Minor Key—Negro Youth in Story and Fact* (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1940).

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Pages 351-52. It was Leo M. Favrot who quoted the Advisory Committee on Education in the British Colonies in his chapter on "Experiments and Demonstrations for Improvement among Rural Schools," in *Adjustments in Rural Education*, p. 91. The description of the Penn School is based on "Penn School's Jubilee Year" (mimeographed) and letters and other documents furnished by Rossa B. Cooley, principal of the school.

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CHAPTER XV

LOCAL PLANNING: WHAT RURAL COMMUNITIES ARE DOING TO IMPROVE THEIR OWN SITUATION

Farming is a way of life, and only the farmer can tell what kind of life he wants. Agricultural planning must be democratic planning.

THE report thus far has stressed the problems which face rural people and the efforts being made by alert schools and communities to meet those problems in a number of important individual areas, such as education, health, recreation, and welfare. But increasingly in recent years rural people have come to recognize that all their social problems are interrelated; and, acting upon that realization, in literally thousands of places throughout the United States they have launched comprehensive programs to improve their communities: to pool their resources of intelligence and good will, to reconcile their differences, and, through planned, co-operative efforts, to remake their environment in the image of their wishes for themselves and their children. These efforts, which will be the subject of this chapter, are rich in promise not only for rural America but for the entire nation. In addition to improving the conditions of rural life, if the results obtained thus far are indicative of future possibilities, they will help rural people to make the most of their resources, an outcome of obvious importance to the nation, and they will strengthen the fabric of American democracy.

The relationship between efforts to improve the community and education is close and important. H. Y. McClusky, among others, urges that the focus of adult education "should be the enrichment of community life," and the co-operative diagnosis and solution of community problems is itself a significant form of education. It is of value, furthermore, not only to participants but to their children, both because the environment itself exerts innumerable educational influences and because progress in improving the community spells

better schools. To be effective, schools require not only understanding and support—and both tend to be engendered through local planning—but the corroboration in the everyday life of the community of the desirable patterns and attitudes they seek to develop in their pupils. Schools cannot flourish in a community which is economically sick, divided by antagonisms, and incapable of offering its population a rich and satisfying life.

Rural schools must be concerned with planning not only because they benefit from it but because their position as a key social institution imposes an obligation upon them to contribute to it. Many studies have shown that the school, the high school in particular, is among the most potent forces in cementing the rural community. There is perhaps no other institution or agency about whose objectives there is such general agreement and in whose work there is such deep and widespread interest. The respect it enjoys, its facilities, and its personnel, habituated to the type of thinking required by planning, all make it possible for the school to play an important part in the efforts of rural people to build a better world for themselves and their children.

Why local planning has come into being.—One of the same factors which has led rural people to plan to meet their needs in specific areas, such as health—their desire to make the most of their often slender resources—has played an important part in the birth and growth of local planning organizations. For example, a community may see that it can achieve some particular objective only by pooling its resources of money, energy, and leadership. Or it may recognize how much waste is involved when all its organizations function autonomously, often even without definite knowledge of one another's purposes and programs. Many communities of less than 2,500 population have as many as forty to sixty different organizations. In one sense these communities may not be as overorganized as they appear, for the membership of all organizations may be predominantly drawn from the top social and economic layers of the population. For that very reason, however, there is usually more overlapping in the membership and leadership of these organizations than one might at first expect to find.

Another factor which contributes to the need of co-ordination is

the tendency of rural organizations to broaden their activities until their programs overlap. This tendency is born of the interrelatedness of all phases of community life, which is particularly apparent in the relatively simple rural environment. It is not unusual for rural organizations which are created to deal with a single problem to turn their attention to one related issue after another until they have a very broad program. Wasteful duplication of effort on the part of groups originally organized for quite diverse purposes is the inevitable result. Another consequence, less obvious but equally unfortunate, is the neglect of many problems which, with better planning, the community could readily and successfully attack.

The critical problems which confronted rural America during the thirties underscored the need for intelligent local planning and led to a rapid expansion of rural community organization. The most dramatic development occurred in connection with land-use planning or, as it is increasingly coming to be called, co-operative agricultural planning. Begun only in the late summer of 1935, by June 30, 1941, co-operative agricultural planning was being carried on in 1,891 counties and in more than ten thousand communities in forty-seven states. In a few years' time the program has enlisted the active participation of 140,000 individuals, seven-eighths of whom are laymen—farm men and women with the desire and determination to solve their own social and economic problems.

Broadly speaking, it may be said that it was the nation's efforts to alleviate the difficulties facing the farm population—intensified by the great depression of 1929—which brought co-operative agricultural planning into being. In the early 1930's perhaps a dozen separate programs were authorized by Congress to deal with various problems confronting American agriculture. Almost inevitably, in view of the haste with which these programs were enacted and the lack of sufficient consideration of their interrelationships, their administration was characterized in some cases by ineffectiveness, conflict, and duplication, which was particularly evident when a number of programs happened to affect the same farm. The need of co-ordinating these programs, of dovetailing them with state and local programs, and of adapting them to local conditions soon became apparent. It was largely to meet these needs that co-operative agricultural plan-

ning was developed. It was, in the beginning, primarily an effort to localize and correlate all programs for American agriculture—to work out a unified program for each area and each farm. Out of this local planning activity, it was realized, a sounder and more democratic national agricultural policy and program could also be expected to emerge.

CO-OPERATIVE AGRICULTURAL PLANNING

While other types of rural community organizations will also be considered in this chapter, co-operative agricultural planning deserves special attention as the most widespread, the most rapidly growing, and, in many respects, the most promising form of rural social planning.

Although begun in 1935, agricultural planning received its real impetus in the summer of 1938 with the drafting of the Mount Weather agreement. This document not only settled an important issue about which there had been sharp difference of opinion—the division of responsibility between federal and state agencies and institutions in connection with national “action” programs for agriculture—but it proposed a blueprint for implementing the understanding which was reached. It was agreed that the Department of Agriculture should retain full responsibility for administering national action programs and that the land-grant colleges and the Department should jointly co-operate, in each locality and state, “in the development of land use plans which might serve as a basis for localizing and correlating all programs.” Further, the agreement contained “a rather detailed description of a proposed organization for planning.” Largely on the basis of its recommendations, which were later embodied in more formal memorandums of understanding between the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and the land-grant colleges in the various states, effective machinery for co-operative agricultural planning was quickly established on the local, state, and national levels.

While the planning at all three levels is necessary for the successful functioning of the entire program, the foundation of agricultural planning is the work done at the local level. The Mount Weather agreement proposed that committees composed of farm men and

women and "representatives of State and Department agencies operating in the county that deal with land use or closely related programs," should be established in every agricultural county. The essence of the co-operative agricultural planning idea is that farm people, program administrators, and research technicians must co-operate in a joint and continuous attack on agricultural problems. The participation of farm people, who form a majority on every county committee, is particularly stressed, in the conviction that democratic planning not only is more in keeping with American traditions but is sounder than any other type; that a common understanding and agreement must be reached on the needs of each local area, each state, and the nation; and that farm people have much to contribute to the achievement of a common policy by virtue of their experience, their knowledge of local problems and conditions, and their stake in the issues to be considered.

Eighty-seven of the counties engaged in co-operative agricultural planning as of June 30, 1941, were organized on a community basis only. County committees served 1,804 counties. More than 57,000 individuals, including approximately 40,000 farm men and women, were participating in the work of the county planning committees. The remaining members were very largely representative of Department of Agriculture agencies and of state and local agencies and organizations. A typical county committee has thirty-two members—seventeen farm men, five farm women, the county agent (who acts as secretary), the home-demonstration agent, the F.S.A. supervisor, an A.A.A. official, a teacher of vocational agriculture, a local government official, and representatives of the Soil Conservation Service, the Farm Credit Administration, and one or two other agencies.

As has been pointed out, there were 87 counties organized on a community basis only. Enough counties had both county and community organization so that in June, 1941, there were approximately 1,200 counties in which the community organization was to be found. Altogether there were more than 10,000 active community committees. These committees are composed almost entirely of representative farm men and women, although agriculture teachers, county agents, and other professional agricultural workers are sometimes members and frequently provide assistance and advice. More

than 82,000 farm men and women served on community committees in the year ending June 30, 1941.

Among the counties participating in co-operative agricultural planning the work proceeds at three levels of intensity. In some counties activity to date has been essentially preparatory in character. Committees have been organized, community and neighborhood boundaries delineated, and some beginning made in assembling information needed for planning. In a far larger group of counties, committees have progressed to the point of making a thorough study of the land resources of their respective counties, the present use of those resources, urgent social and economic problems, and necessary readjustments. In some of these counties study and group deliberation have already led to various types of action to improve conditions. Finally, in a third group of counties, small in number but steadily growing, planning has resulted in the formulation of unified programs, now being implemented by action, for the solution of important agricultural and social problems.

Planning at the state and federal levels.—Membership on state agricultural planning committees is ordinarily divided about evenly between farm people from the various types of farming areas within the state and representatives of state and federal institutions and agencies. This latter group almost everywhere includes the state director of the Extension Service (who serves as chairman of the committee), the state representative of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics (who serves as secretary), the director of the state experiment station, the chairman of the state A.A.A. committee, the state co-ordinator of the Soil Conservation Service, the state director of the F.S.A., and representatives of the F.C.A. and the Forest Service. Many other federal and state agencies are represented on state agricultural planning committees, the exact ones varying among the states. State committees have on the average twenty-nine members, but they vary in size from seventeen in Kentucky to fifty in New York. Each committee attempts to work out a unified plan for its particular state and to secure action from the appropriate state or federal agency with regard to those problems which transcend county boundaries. State committees are currently concerning themselves with such problems as farm drainage, farm, labor, health, and housing. The plans of county committees are used in developing

state plans, and state plans, in turn, provide a framework for further work by county committees.

Co-operative agricultural planning in each state is facilitated by the work of a special three-man committee consisting of representatives of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, the Extension Service, and the state experiment station. This group, which represents the three agencies most directly concerned with agricultural planning, acts as a service committee for the state and county planning committees. It formulates the provisions of the annual agreements between the B.A.E., the Extension Service, and the experiment station; it develops details of procedure to be followed in planning at state and local levels; and it encourages the development of research work related to planning. In most states it acts as a clearing committee for all requests from local planning committees for research and planning assistance.

In order to achieve unified administration of national agricultural programs and to contribute to the other objectives of co-operative agricultural planning, the Department of Agriculture has been fundamentally reorganized. The Bureau of Agricultural Economics has been designated as the general planning agency for the Department, and the Bureau itself has been reorganized. It now includes a Division of State and Local Planning to which general responsibility for the co-operative agriculture planning program has been assigned. The Division is primarily engaged in the development and initiation of effective planning procedures including procedures for committee organization, techniques of problem analysis, and methods of securing action. The Division also devotes a great deal of attention to the research needs of planning groups. Close contact is maintained with the research bureaus of the Department of Agriculture and with state experiment stations in order to encourage these agencies to provide services to agricultural planning committees. In addition, research and other projects proposed to the W.P.A. which may be of potential value in agricultural planning are reviewed in consultation with other divisions of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. The results of these project reviews are sent to the state B.A.E. representatives, so that they will be in a position to correlate the projects with the agricultural planning work in their respective states.

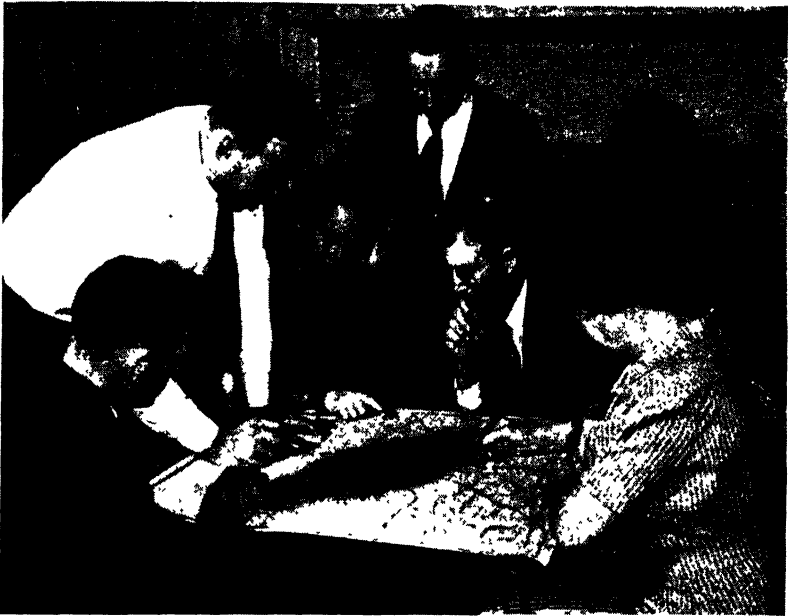
So much for the machinery and general character of co-operative

agricultural planning. How does it actually operate in various counties throughout the nation? What are some of the specific objectives, procedures, and accomplishments of agricultural planning committees?

Agricultural planning in Teton County, Montana.—Among the first counties to engage in co-operative agricultural planning and to develop a unified program was Teton County, Montana, whose 2,300 square miles sprawl over the arid north-central portion of the state. Many of the one thousand farmers in the county came from sections of the country where the rainfall was heavier, and the county was settled in a period when rainfall was abnormally high. It is not surprising, therefore, that the land was abused and that serious problems of land and water use subsequently arose. What is surprising, to anyone unfamiliar with the possibilities of democratic procedure, is the way Teton County farmers are solving these problems through collective deliberation and action.

It may be that the existence of community and county recreation councils in Teton County facilitated the development of agricultural planning. In any case, soon after the idea of planning was broached, Teton County farmers got together in their individual communities and elected three-man planning committees. They also set up a county committee composed of the chairmen of community committees and representatives of county, state, and federal agencies. Then began a period of intense study in which the committees charted the land-use areas of the county in accordance with its productivity and other characteristics and secured pertinent information about land and water resources, size of farms, cost of production, population, landownership, and numerous other things. Both in securing data and in summarizing it in usable form, the committees enlisted the help of the Extension Service, the Montana agricultural experiment station, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, the A.A.A., and the W.P.A. On the basis of the information obtained the community committees decided that certain adjustments were needed in land-use and farming practices. The recommendations of the community committees were merged and correlated by the county committee into a county-wide plan, which was presented to farmers for discussion, revision, and approval at open community

meetings. The revised county report was then submitted to the state land-use planning committee and to all federal and state agencies interested in land-use programs in Teton County. Each agency was asked to give its opinion of the recommendations in the report and to indicate what it could do to help carry them out.



Farm Security Administration Photographer Marion Post

A COMMUNITY CO-OPERATIVE AGRICULTURAL PLANNING COMMITTEE IN CASWELL COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

One thing the Teton County planning committee decided was that twenty thousand acres of low-grade plowland, yielding seven bushels or less of wheat per acre, should be taken out of cultivation and returned to grass. The way this one objective was achieved illustrates how the democratic planning of farm people can give direction and cohesion to the programs and agencies which operate to serve them. The decisions reached by planning committees in Teton County enabled the governmental agencies active there to point their efforts to the same objectives and function as a team instead of working in isolation or even at cross-purposes.

Here are a few representative steps which were taken. The A.A.A.

made the lowest-grade lands ineligible for wheat allotments. To discourage the planting of grass on good lands for the purpose of obtaining benefit payments and to concentrate planting on lands which should be permanently in grass, it adopted a policy that grass planted under the agricultural conservation program must remain in for at least two years. The Farm Security Administration agreed not to make loans for the cultivation of low-grade plowland and grazing land and to try to see that land controlled by F.S.A. clients would be used in recommended ways. Both the F.S.A. and the F.C.A. altered their loan policies and took other steps pointed toward the achievement of farm units of more satisfactory size, so that farmers will be under less pressure to abuse land for the sake of immediate return. The Montana state land department decided to co-operate by refusing to lease sod lands for cultivation, by requiring that certain types of soil-conservation practice be followed, and by reserving the right to cancel leases for various types of land misuse. County officials set to work on a reclassification of land for taxation purposes under which assessment will be based in part on land use as well as land productivity. To encourage proper land use, lowest-grade plowlands will be given a grazing classification when reseeded to grass; grazing lands will be given a plowland classification if put into cultivation. The county agent undertook to acquaint nonresident landowners with the purposes and recommendations of the agricultural planning committee.

The shifting of twenty thousand acres of plowland to grass is only one of a number of objectives toward which the farmers of Teton County are making visible progress. Much is being done throughout the county to control erosion and use the land wisely. Efforts are being made to conserve and augment existing water supplies. Weed, rodent, and insect control; control and development of timber resources and wild life; credit; and land tenure are all receiving increased consideration. Farm people are learning how to analyze their own problems and how to direct their own energies and the efforts of governmental agencies toward their solution.

Planning in a one-crop southern county.—Caswell County, North Carolina, furnishes a striking example of the way co-operative agricultural planning is helping to improve the situation of a one-crop

farm area whose basic resource of soil has been badly depleted through the years. Because the control of erosion is one of the most urgent problems facing Caswell County, a county-wide terracing program has been undertaken by the planning committee with the co-operation of numerous public agencies. The Extension Service and vocational agriculture teachers have agreed to carry on an intensive educational program; the Soil Conservation Service undertook to stake out 1,800 acres of land for terracing and to train two crews of N.Y.A. youth to stake out additional terraces. The F.S.A. underwrote twelve community service loans for the purchasing of terracing equipment and supervised the construction of terraces on the farms of fifty of its clients. Other agencies, too, co-operated, and a professional workers' council was organized to facilitate collaboration.

Efforts are also being made to control erosion and improve the soil through increased use of cover crops, crop rotation, and a more widespread use of lime and phosphate. Because it was felt that many problems of the county arise from its dependence on one cash crop—tobacco—attention is also being given to achieving a better-balanced farm program. Farmers are attempting to produce more food for their families and more feed for their livestock. The number of livestock in the county is being built up as rapidly as possible, and its quality improved, with the objectives of enriching the diet of farm families and developing a supplementary source of cash income.

All the above aspects of Caswell County's program are phases of one basic objective—better farm organization and management. A second important objective was also selected for attention in 1940—community and home improvement. Attempts are being made to secure a public health unit and, meanwhile, through educational work, the extension of an F.S.A. medical-care program, and other means, to correct certain unsatisfactory conditions. A program has been launched to improve the appearance of farmsteads and public centers, such as churches and schools. Youth and adults from low-income families are being encouraged to participate in community activities. Caswell County's program is attempting to raise the morale of the people as well as to better their material position.

Basic planning policies and procedures.—While the details of co-

operative agricultural planning vary from place to place, certain policies and procedures have contributed to the success of planning the nation over. Everywhere, for example, it has proved desirable to base county (and state and federal) planning on the work of community committees. At the community level problems emerge in clear and concrete form and the broad lay participation so essential



Farm Security Administration Photographer Marion Post

NEGRO FARMERS PARTICIPATING IN CO-OPERATIVE
AGRICULTURAL PLANNING (CASWELL CO , N C)

to democratic social action can be most readily elicited. Because the natural sociological community represents a unit within which people are bound together by many common interests and are accustomed to working together, it represents the best basic local unit for planning efforts. Many localities originally organized for agricultural planning on a township or some other basis have found it advantageous to reorganize along natural community lines, and the careful delineation of community borders is now customarily undertaken early in the planning process.

A second essential of successful planning is the achievement of

truly representative planning committees which "mirror the attitudes, opinions and judgments of all . . . people in a given area." Communities are usually divided by geographic, economic, social, and racial factors into a number of different groups, each of which has its own special problems, attitudes, and traditions. Each of these groups must have a voice in democratic social planning, not only as a matter of right, but because each group has something important to contribute. "Committees have found that their recommendations are much more practical, more complete, and more intelligent when the judgments of all . . . groups have been pooled." Because such recommendations have the backing of the entire population, furthermore, they are far more likely to be acted upon.

There are obvious difficulties in the way of securing representative planning committees, and Bureau of Agricultural Economics officials recognize that the ideal is far from being achieved. In many parts of the country social barriers prevent disadvantaged agricultural groups from receiving adequate representation on planning committees. Many farm laborers change their residence too frequently to play an active part in the affairs of any community. Some low-income farm people have no interest in participating in planning or have been discouraged in previous attempts to play an active part in community life. In the South Negroes have often been barred from planning committees or given inadequate representation. However, many of those concerned with planning at the local, state, and national levels are keenly aware of the situation, and progress is being made toward the attainment of committees which represent all groups and strata in the farm population.

The importance of the assumption by laymen of the basic responsibility for planning has been stressed, but everywhere assistance has been given by research technicians and program administrators who serve on the committees. Technicians and administrators are often able to supply, or to help committees to secure, needed data. Their familiarity with the functions and resources of their own agencies puts them in a position to make many valuable suggestions and, on the other hand, to point out the impracticability of certain ideas and thus prevent disappointment and waste of energy. Finally, their presence facilitates the meshing of local planning with planning

and the work of public agencies at the state and federal levels. If co-operative agricultural planning is to achieve its democratic purposes, laymen must accept final responsibility for policy-making, but experience has already demonstrated that research technicians and program administrators can contribute in many ways to the soundness and effectiveness of the work of planning committees.

A few other procedures commonly followed by successful agricultural planning committees may be briefly noted. Except in some instances in 1941, when the exigencies of the defense program compelled committees to reach decisions about necessary adjustments in agricultural production with the utmost speed, planning has typically been based on careful study. Enlisting the co-operation of such agencies as the state experiment stations, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, and the schools, planning committees have attempted to obtain exact information with regard to such things as soil, annual rainfall, length of growing season, land use, water and irrigation facilities, location of forests, highway development, electric-power lines, levels of living, and the location of F.C.A. and F.S.A. clients and tax-delinquent farms. Usually they prepare reports and maps to summarize their findings. Such procedures not only have proved of immeasurable help in the preparation of sound plans but have facilitated action by narrowing down complicated and often abstract issues to specific questions upon which agreement can be reached with relative ease.

Almost all rural planning organizations have found it desirable to set up definite goals. In Caswell County and many other places long-term objectives have first been decided upon, then more specific goals selected for immediate attention. Elsewhere people have decided first upon certain specific undertakings—indeed, the desire to solve some particular problem has played a part in the organization of many committees—then decided upon their larger objectives. Planning committees have also found it helpful to take stock at periodic intervals of their progress toward their goals. Finally, planning committees have tried to be as precise in their delegation of responsibilities as in their formulation of objectives. Reports typically indicate not only what is to be done but just who is to do it.

Some typical accomplishments of planning.—The scope of co-opera-

tive agricultural planning, and the results it is achieving, can perhaps best be indicated by listing some representative activities and accomplishments of planning committees in various parts of the country. Activities are grouped in accordance with the general purpose they help to achieve, but it will be obvious that many activities could be listed in two or three places.

Co-ordination of agricultural action programs.—The shifting of twenty thousand acres of low-grade plowland into grass in Teton County and Caswell County's terracing program both illustrate the way agricultural agencies are learning to dovetail their efforts under the central direction furnished by planning. Hundreds of similar examples could be cited. In Culpeper County, Virginia, and other places, all representatives of the Department of Agriculture have been housed in one building, which facilitates frequent consultation and close co-operation. In Ross County, Ohio, a central clearing committee has been established "to review individual farm plans in which more than one public agency is interested."

Adaptation of agricultural programs to local conditions.—In almost every county where planning has been attempted there are instances of such adaptations, but they are rarely dramatic in character. In numerous places, as in Teton County, slight adjustments have been made in A.A.A. programs to adapt them to local conditions. The findings of planning committees have been of material assistance to public agencies in such diverse tasks as determining the boundaries for soil conservation and forest acquisition projects and developing sound plans for farm families participating in their programs. They have enabled federal credit agencies to give more intelligent consideration to requests for loans and have helped the Extension Service to adjust its educational program to the needs of different localities.

Working relationships between federal, state, and local agencies.—Agricultural planning has everywhere fostered closer collaboration between public agencies at different governmental levels. For example, it has facilitated collaboration between local governments, state highway departments, and the Public Roads Administration in the development and improvement of public highways. In a number of states the activity of planning committees has stimulated county and state governments to work together for rural zoning, which bars

people from beginning to use land in certain specified ways and from settling in designated isolated areas. Because zoning is most effective when combined with programs for the purchase of the land of farmers already settled in isolated areas, in Wisconsin and a number of other states the Soil Conservation Service and state authorities are co-operating through land-purchase programs with counties engaged in zoning.

Proper land use and soil and water conservation.—Zoning and many of the other activities already mentioned contribute to better land use. Practically all county committees have developed measures aimed at the conservation of soil and water resources. Planning committees have been active in obtaining passage of state soil conservation acts, in petitioning for soil conservation districts, and in the work of organizing districts. Technicians of the Department of Agriculture have solicited the co-operation of planning committees in preparing water-facility plans for many counties in the western half of the United States. Close relationships between flood-control survey parties and planning committees are being developed over the entire country.

Necessary adjustments in an area's agricultural practices.—In Caswell County, North Carolina, and many other places planning has helped farm people to develop a better-balanced agriculture, thus lessening their dependence on a single speculative and soil-depleting crop. In the Dixie community of Washington County, Idaho, where dry farming has to be practiced, planning has guided a shift from wheat into hay, pasture, alfalfa seed, and livestock. As a result of this change the survival of the community was assured.

Establishment of co-operative enterprises.—In many parts of the country planning committees have given attention to organizing co-operatives for marketing livestock, milk, fruit, and other products. In Atlantic County, New Jersey, the assistance furnished by a planning committee enabled a group of farm women to proceed with a long-contemplated project to establish a co-operative market. In Arkansas planning has stimulated the organization of clubs which co-operatively purchase farm supplies and livestock.

Tax adjustments on farm real estate.—In many places the findings of agricultural planning committees are serving as a basis for revising

assessed land values and achieving more equitable taxation policies. In Iowa a subcommittee of the state agricultural planning committee and forty county committees are working with the state tax commission to improve the farm real estate assessment situation.

Better governmental service and needed new services.—Many examples have already been given to show the way in which governmental agencies improved their services by making use of data gathered in connection with planning and by gearing programs to the objectives of planning groups. In a number of places public agencies have augmented their staffs at the request of planning committees; for example, in Caswell County the Extension Service has employed a Negro agent and the F.S.A. an additional technician. Committees in many parts of the country are attempting to secure needed new governmental services, such as public health units and libraries, for their areas, and here and there new services have already been instituted as a result of the efforts of planning committees. As will be brought out later in the chapter, in some places planning has led to significant improvements in school facilities and educational services.

Some basic values of agricultural planning.—The full value and significance of co-operative agricultural planning cannot be adequately indicated even by such a list of accomplishments as has been given. In 1941 it was demonstrated that the existence of a network of planning committees is of inestimable value to the nation in meeting emergency situations. At the request of the Secretary of Agriculture, in a period of five months' time state committees developed the broad outlines of plans which should permit farm production to be expanded to meet defense needs without waste of human and physical resources and to reduce the threat of a sharp post-war deflation. State committees are now engaged in working out the details of these plans. In a number of places local planning committees are also materially assisting the war effort.

Perhaps the most significant fact about co-operative agricultural planning is that it represents an effort on the part of farm people themselves to build a better rural civilization. Many instances might be cited to show how the contributions of farm people make for the development of sounder and more practical plans. Planning is more certain to result in action, furthermore, when it is done with

the participation of farm people rather than by research technicians and program administrators alone. The cutover region of northern Minnesota provides a particularly striking example. Since the 1920's agricultural experts have seen that much of the land in this region was neither adapted to farming nor needed for farm use and that it should be devoted to timber, wild life, recreation, and related uses. The recommendations they made, however, were bitterly opposed by many local people, including government officials, and widespread settlement was encouraged with little regard to the suitability of the land for farming. Land forfeited for nonpayment of taxes was quickly resold if a buyer could be found. As an increasing amount of land became idle and land in cultivation became less productive, "public debts, relief rolls, and demands for federal and state aid mounted." During 1938 co-operative agricultural planning was started in the area. In the process of planning local people themselves reached the conclusion that certain areas were unsuited for farming. As a result, in the neighborhood of 4,800,000 acres of tax-forfeited lands in eight counties have been withheld from sale. Three county boards have adopted rural zoning ordinances. Plans have been made to facilitate the clearing of land well suited to agriculture and to remove displaced farmers to such land. In addition to saving new settlers from the discouragement and poverty which are the inevitable consequences of the effort to wrest a living from poor land, the steps which have been democratically decided upon promise to improve the situation of people now living in the area, to lead to sounder use of the land, and to reduce road and school costs.

The intangible benefits which flow from the participation of farm people in planning may prove even more important than the concrete accomplishments which their participation makes possible. Many social scientists have recognized that the work of representative local planning groups serves as a safeguard against strong central government. Planning bulwarks democracy both because it provides machinery through which people can express their collective will and because it renews people's faith in the possibilities of co-operative action. Everywhere effective planning tends to improve morale and to give those who engage in it confidence in themselves and in the future of their communities. Through participation

in planning people see that they can help to shape their own world, and they acquire skill in making democracy work.

OTHER EXAMPLES OF RURAL PLANNING

Important as it is, co-operative agricultural planning represents only one form of rural social organization. Other approaches of very great promise have been developed in a number of rural communities.

Alexandria, an agricultural community of about thirty square miles located in the heart of Ohio, was encouraged to organize a community council by the success of a three-day centennial celebration. Although the village of Alexandria contains only about four hundred and fifty people and the entire community about two thousand, four thousand people attended one or another of the centennial events. Alexandria thereupon organized a permanent community council "to further through cooperative enterprise any plan for community betterment." The council is composed of two groups, the first consisting of representatives of designated agencies, such as the schools, churches, the Grange, and the P.-T.A., and specified individuals such as the mayor of Alexandria Village and the president of the town's board of trustees, the county agent, and the home-demonstration agent. The second group includes "any other persons interested in community welfare, who may care to participate."

The Alexandria Community Council analyzes community needs and decides what action is necessary to meet those needs. So far as possible, however, the council asks its constituent organizations to assume responsibility for implementing its program, although it undertakes certain activities which are not in the province of any individual organization. The council has set up a certain number of long-term objectives but emphasizes one major project each year. During the first decade of its existence it has achieved progress in coordinating the efforts of the churches of the community, in extending the benefits of electricity to more farm homes, and in improving public buildings and parks. The school library has been made into a community library, making it eligible for certain county funds. A number of important educational and recreational programs have been launched, including a community school for adults and a Hal-

loween play day which has minimized children's inclination toward destructive pranks. In general, the social life of the community has been greatly enriched. In 1941 the president of the Alexandria Council wrote: "We have so many activities in our community that we had to have a community calendar to avoid conflicts. There is not an evening in the week that our high school is not in use."

The Stonycreek Valley Community Association.—In and around Shanksville, Pennsylvania, is another rural planning group which has a history of more than ten years of successful existence. The building of the Stonycreek Township Consolidated School, which is located near Shanksville in almost the exact center of a community of some two thousand persons, paved the way for its organization. Before the building of the school, the territory was divided, each local school and church serving as a social center for a small surrounding area. The consolidated school gave the community unity and cohesion. A week of union church services held in the new school building shortly after it was opened was so successful that it was decided to establish a community organization, the Stonycreek Valley Community Association. A number of committees were set up to deal with important phases of the life of the community, and committee chairmen and association officers were elected by popular vote. Everyone interested participated in the elections. Unlike the Alexandria Community Council, which is predominantly composed of representatives of other community organizations, the Stonycreek Valley Community Association includes in its membership the entire adult population of the community, or at least as many as are willing to join in its work.

The association has no paid officials and does its work primarily through committees, each of which is composed of from six to twenty citizens of the community. In 1940-41 eleven such committees were functioning. Each committee undertakes a number of different projects every year. In 1940-41, for example, the Health Committee determined to: (1) arrange for a baby clinic, preschool clinic, and any other health check-ups for which there was community demand; (2) arrange an exhibit at the school and community fair; (3) show health movies to the school and community at intervals throughout the year; (4) encourage the improvement of recreational facilities

and consider the possibility of building a swimming pool; and (5) encourage the sale of tuberculosis seals and Red Cross memberships.

Some projects are continued year after year, but others are sloughed off, their purposes having been achieved, and new ones are constantly being undertaken. Since its organization in 1930 the Stonycreek Valley Community Association has effected or stimulated many notable improvements. As a result of its efforts a community park has been built, roads in the locality have been improved, a community chorus and a community and school orchestra have been organized, and co-operation among farmers has increased. The school has become a true community center. The practice of holding union church services on several occasions each year has become traditional. Most important of all, the association has knitted the community together, developed a feeling of community pride, and fostered friendly co-operation among the entire population. One convincing proof of this achievement is the success of annual picnics and other community affairs, proceeds from which are sufficient to defray the operating expenses of the association, but the influence of co-operative planning makes itself felt, too, in the everyday life of the community. "The best results of this Association cannot be put on paper as they are of the intangible sort that are best reflected in Community loyalty and daily living."

Differences and similarities in council procedure.—Numerous additional examples of successful rural planning might be cited, and there is enough variation among them to suggest that there is no one "best" pattern for effective rural planning. While rural co-ordinating councils, like agricultural planning groups, follow a number of procedures in common, it is clear that planning efforts must be adapted to the size and situation of the community and the temperament and objectives of its population. Some successful planning has been accomplished by groups which are quite loosely organized; elsewhere co-ordinating councils have a formal constitution, frequent meetings, and elaborate organizational machinery. The affairs of some councils are conducted entirely by laymen; a few employ full-time workers; and still others utilize the part-time services of an employee of some public agency, such as a school or a library. A final significant difference between planning groups is that some, like the

Alexandria Community Council, are composed predominantly or exclusively of representatives of other organizations while others, like the Stonycreek Valley Community Association, attempt to secure the direct participation of all adult members of the community. Each of these types of organization has its own advantages and limitations, but in general it appears that the council which attempts to include everyone is most successful in small communities where there are few organized groups, whereas the representative type is most successful in larger communities where there are a number of agencies whose work requires co-ordination.

As one would expect, there are important similarities, as well as differences, in the policies and working procedures of co-ordinating councils, and many of their policies and procedures closely resemble those of agricultural planning committees. All types of rural co-ordinating councils have found it essential to secure a broad membership base. Councils of the representative type have tried to enlist the support of all organizations in their respective areas. Councils which include individuals rather than agency representatives in their membership have learned the importance of securing as large and as representative a membership as possible. One now successful county planning organization was handicapped immeasurably in the first year or so of its operation because it was composed too exclusively of "leading citizens" and acquired the reputation of being a closed corporation. When the membership of the county organization was doubled and community councils established, enlisting still more people in the planning effort, progress was visibly speeded up.

Successful co-ordinating councils have attempted to distribute leadership responsibilities widely, in addition to securing a broad membership base. Even councils with paid administrators have put emphasis upon the discovery and development of capable leaders. One device which has been recommended for developing leadership ability and spreading responsibility is the appointment of young men and women as deputy leaders to assist community leaders who may be overworked.

Like agricultural planning committees, other types of rural co-ordinating councils have made careful surveys of community conditions, resources, and needs, but, again like agricultural committees,

they have sometimes begun their activity with some undertaking the need for which was already evident and agreed upon. Co-ordinating councils everywhere have attempted to chart a course of action which reflected the composite judgment of the entire planning group. Specific undertakings have, of course, varied from place to place, but almost all co-ordinating councils have labored for certain common objectives, such as the development of community spirit and the provision of needed new public services. Councils of the representative type have striven to increase the efficiency and to co-ordinate the efforts of member-organizations, both by familiarizing them with one another's programs and by fostering community understanding of their work. Most co-ordinating councils have found it valuable to take stock of their progress toward their objectives at periodic intervals.

Finally, without relinquishing basic responsibility for planning, co-ordinating councils have not hesitated to utilize the help of outside institutions and agencies. In diagnosing community problems and to a lesser extent in achieving certain specific planning objectives, they have received help from the land-grant colleges and other educational institutions; from various departments of their respective state governments, notably those interested in public education, library service, and health; from the Extension Service, the W.P.A., and the N.Y.A.; and, finally, from a number of private organizations, including Co-ordinating Councils, Inc., the National Recreation Association, the Parent-Teachers Association, the American Legion, and such service organizations as Rotary, Kiwanis, and Lions.

Informal and temporary types of co-operation.—The focus of this chapter has been on organized permanent planning groups which deal with the entire range of community problems. It should be emphasized, however, that there are many other valuable types of local planning. The desirability of co-ordinating a community's efforts in individual fields such as health, recreation, and welfare has been emphasized at various points in this report. Informal co-operation which cuts across such fields is equally essential in rural life. To be an effective instructor, a vocational agriculture teacher must work closely not only with his colleagues in the school, including the teachers of academic subjects and the home economics teacher, but

also with such individuals as the county agent, the home-demonstration agent, and the representatives of federal credit agencies and action programs. To fulfil his responsibilities to his students in connection with guidance and placement, he must keep in close touch with the public employment office, federal credit agencies, local bankers and businessmen, and the farmers of the area. Every individual working in a rural community has similar opportunities for continuous informal co-operation with others.

Co-operation for the achievement of some particular objective is also of great value in rural community life. Rural people have discovered the value of pooling their resources to obtain some wanted improvement, such as a community house, and of working together for the success of community events, such as homecoming celebrations, fairs, and harvest festivals. In a number of places, too, rural people have gathered for one- or two-day institutes to discuss community affairs.

Not only are informal co-operation and co-operation in particular fields or for particular objectives of intrinsic value but in many cases they have led to the organization of permanent community planning councils. Notably in California, but in many other places as well, councils originally organized to consider some particular problem (in California, juvenile delinquency) have progressively broadened their scope until they have become general planning councils. Alexandria furnishes an instance of the way in which planning for some particular community event may lead to the organization of a permanent co-ordinating council, and in West Virginia and other places institutes on community problems have led to the organization of such councils. There is no hard-and-fast distinction between informal planning or planning pointed toward some particular objective, on the one hand, and more formal and continuous planning, on the other. Each type of planning generates and reinforces the other.

PLANNING AND THE SCHOOLS

As has been seen, the erection of a new consolidated school set the stage for the organization of the Stonycreek Valley Community Association. Numerous sociological investigations have revealed that the school plays a more important part than any other institu-

tion or factor in determining community boundaries and giving a community cohesion. Furthermore, the school enjoys a degree of acceptance which puts it in a singularly fortunate position to contribute to community planning.

The school is the one institution maintained by all the people which represents their common aspirations and ideals. In religion, they are divided by sectarianism, in government, by party politics, in business, by conflicting economic interests; but they are all concerned with the education of their children, desiring to give them the best possible advantages. It is for this reason that the high school or the new consolidated school, which usually, but not always, includes a high school, has become the most important institution for the process of rural community organization.

The school has much to gain from, as well as much to contribute to, rural social planning, and wherever schools have participated in the work of planning councils there have been immediate and tangible benefits to them. Both the nature of these benefits and the key part the school can play in planning are well illustrated in Greenville County, South Carolina. School personnel have contributed in many ways to the success of the rural community councils in this county. In the Jordan community, for example, which is purely rural and has neither a trading center nor telephones, gatherings of teachers provided the nucleus for the organization of a council. At the request of the district superintendent of schools a staff member of the Greenville County Council had been assigned to work with the teachers from the six elementary schools and the one high school in the Jordan area. Teachers met regularly each week, organized a dramatics club, and in general developed *esprit de corps* and the ability to work together. The idea of a community council was broached, and a meeting called to which school trustees, teachers, ministers, and others were invited. Additional meetings were held in the different neighborhoods of the Jordan area, and a community council was ultimately organized. In its three years of existence it has already accomplished a great deal. With some help from federal agencies a community health center, a co-operative cannery, and a co-operative sweet-potato curing house have been built. A co-operative store and a credit union have been organized, a branch of the Greenville County Library has been established in the area, and a

program sponsored by the council has improved the appearance of the community. Recreational programs are held monthly under the rotating sponsorship of a number of organizations. A new spirit of co-operation now characterizes the area.

School people have participated prominently in the work of the Jordan Council, and its work has benefited the schools in numerous ways. The high school has become an important center, sponsoring, among other events, an annual community fair. The school paper now serves the entire community. As a result of being closely tied up with life and problems of the area, school activities and the work in vocational agriculture and other subjects have been made more meaningful. Under the sponsorship of the Jordan Council and with the help of the W.P.A., an auditorium and gymnasium and three homes for teachers have been erected.

Fayette County, Kentucky, furnishes an illustration of the contribution planning can make to the improvement of educational services and facilities over a long period of time. A school improvement committee was established at the inception of planning in Fayette County more than twenty years ago.

The work of that committee . . . was successful in such measure that every boy and girl in the county now has access to excellent high school instruction, and well-equipped centralized graded schools are available to all. At the outset of the program there was a total enrollment of 175 high school students, today the high school enrollment is more than 1,700. All schools have hot lunches furnished to the pupils at cost. Health service is provided for all the schools, and a program of dental examinations and corrections has been put into effect. Courses in agriculture and in home economics are available to all students. There are courses in farm shop, electricity (including radio), auto mechanics, wood work and carpentry, mechanical drawing, distributive occupations and salesmanship, stenography, and secretarial practice. Vocational night courses were inaugurated which now have an enrollment of more than 200 persons. Transportation is furnished to all students living at a distance too great for them to walk to school.

Many factors besides planning are responsible for these improvements, but observers on the scene are satisfied that planning has contributed materially to the progress which has been witnessed. Furthermore, many benefits flow from planning which cannot readily be indicated by any such résumé of specific accomplishments. What-

ever planning does to improve community conditions directly or indirectly enhances the effectiveness of the work done in the schools. Laymen get a better understanding of the purposes and program of the schools by co-operating with teachers in planning, and teachers obtain knowledge about community conditions and problems which inevitably makes their instruction more vital and realistic. In general, planning activity in which the school joins assimilates the school more completely in the everyday life of the community, a result which tends to make its work more meaningful and facilitates students' adjustments to their adult responsibilities.

Co-operative agricultural planning and the schools.—Rural schools have not participated as actively in the work of co-operative agricultural planning committees as in the work of other co-ordinating councils, nor have such committees, in general, devoted as much attention as other planning groups to educational problems. Neither of these facts is surprising in view of the inevitable preoccupation of agricultural planning committees, in the early years of their development, with basic land use and economic problems. What is surprising is the extent to which schools already are participating in agricultural planning and the interest committees are manifesting in education as they broaden the scope of their activity. Trends now in evidence suggest that agricultural planning may contribute significantly to the improvement of rural education in the future.

In a number of localities school personnel, notably vocational agriculture and home economics teachers, are participating in the work of county and community agricultural planning committees. In Caswell County, North Carolina, among other places, schools have been asked to undertake specific responsibilities in connection with planning projects. For example, in Caswell County the vocational education departments of the schools were asked to supervise the staking of 750 acres and to stress proper soil conservation practices in their classroom work and field activities. In connection with a program to improve the living conditions of tenant families, the schools were asked to do such things as supervise students in making screens for their homes; wire tenant houses for electricity without charge; and discuss various types of landlord-tenant agreements in classrooms. Here and there students have participated in the fact-

finding work on which sound planning is based. Planning committees are also turning increasingly to the schools to supplement the efforts of the Extension Service in promoting community understanding of the purposes and values of planning.

A number of agricultural planning committees in widely separated parts of the country have concerned themselves with school problems, particularly such problems as are closely related to land use and efficient utilization of economic resources. In Minnesota and other states the work of planning committees has hastened school reorganizations which have reduced school costs and improved the quality of educational services. Planning committees have also proposed new school-bus routes, considered the problem of increasing high-school attendance among the children of isolated families, and suggested where new schools should be located. Not all the agricultural planning committees which have concerned themselves with education have confined their attention to such problems as these. A number of committees, particularly in Tennessee, have interested themselves in the school hot-lunch program and urged increased emphasis on nutrition and health education. The Lincoln County, Wyoming, planning committee sponsored a health survey of school children. The growing interest state agricultural planning committees are taking in education is evident from the large number of recommendations dealing with the subject in the plans they prepared for adjusting American agriculture to the defense emergency.

Of the utmost promise is the prospect that agricultural planning will ultimately come to be studied in all rural schools by both children and adults. In a few counties planning committees are now holding occasional joint sessions with adult vocational students, and in one or two places agricultural courses for adults have been built largely around the work of co-operative planning. In Bowman County, North Dakota, a planning committee was instrumental in having introduced into the schools a course in elementary agricultural planning and wild-life conservation, and in Erie County, New York, a planning committee conducted a land-use study tour for 171 vocational students and teachers. In the state of Washington considerable work has been done in developing a course of study "that would make it possible for farm children, by actual mapping and

study of local problems, to become acquainted with the process whereby their elders participate in the agricultural planning work." Such a course, it is felt, will help to prepare for their future vocational and civic responsibilities those students who will remain in the country.

All over the country the materials developed by planning committees—reports, maps, and recommendations—are being used increasingly in the schools. Such materials vivify class work in numerous subjects by making abstract questions concrete and by giving general issues a familiar local framework. They illustrate the close relationship which frequently exists between research and life. Perhaps most important of all, they give pupils fresh insights into conditions and problems in the world with which they will shortly have to cope and acquaint them with democratic processes for solving those problems.

AN ASSESSMENT OF RURAL PLANNING

Successful examples of rural local planning have been emphasized in this discussion, but it must not be thought that planning attempts have everywhere prospered. In a number of rural communities planning has been tried for a while, then abandoned. In most of these communities the disintegration of a planning organization has occurred some time after the active sponsorship of such an agency as the Extension Service has been withdrawn, but in these instances, no less than in others, the failure suggests that the people of the community have been unable to work together effectively for the solution of their common problems. It should be realized, too, that active planning groups have sometimes met with failure or achieved only limited success in connection with some of their most important projects. Indeed, it is precisely in connection with such projects, which may jeopardize the economic position of some individual or group, that the most difficulty is usually encountered. In one rural-centered town in the South a large federal housing project sponsored by a co-ordinating council was blocked by the opposition of real estate men. One cannot survey the run-of-the-mill achievements of some planning groups without realizing that they have confined themselves to relatively trivial and innocuous undertakings, post-

poning consideration of more basic problems on which it is difficult to reach agreement and secure action. It is clear, furthermore, that both the assistance of outside agencies and the enthusiasm which usually attends the beginning of any effort have contributed materially to the successes which rural planning has achieved thus far.

There are many obstacles to the success of local planning, and distinct limitations to what it can accomplish. Planning inevitably reflects the weaknesses, as well as the strengths, of the individuals and groups who engage in it. Effective co-operative action is impeded, for example, by selfishness and shortsightedness; by attitudes of indifference or defeatism; and by a distrust of planning as something radical or incompatible with independence and self-reliance. Religious, social, and economic cleavages, particularly when they reflect themselves in group antagonisms, sharply restrict the effectiveness of local planning, where they do not make it impossible altogether. In many communities planning efforts have failed or been handicapped because of rivalry among different religious denominations or between "conservative" and "liberal" church groups. Elsewhere its effectiveness has been decreased because the differences of certain social and economic groups could not be reconciled or because certain groups were not given representation at all, so that many of the potential values of planning were forfeited. Similarly, conflicts between village and open country have in some places impaired the effectiveness of co-ordinating councils, and in the South planning efforts have been handicapped by difficulties arising from the relationships between whites and Negroes. In some places the work of planning groups has also been retarded by the shortage of individuals with leadership ability and by such factors as the lack of a suitable meeting place and the difficulty of gathering people together.

Whatever sponsorship a community planning organization may have, there are immense difficulties in the way of its achieving a comprehensive and well-rounded program which considers the needs of the entire community. In some places individuals or agencies have sponsored community planning for their own aggrandizement, and such purposes have quickly been detected and resented. But even councils sponsored by individuals relatively free from egotism and not overly concerned with their own agency or institution almost

inevitably reflect, at least in their early undertakings, the particular interests, purposes, and viewpoints of their organizers. Thus co-operative agricultural planning has so far dealt primarily with basic land-use and economic problems and has interested itself only to a limited extent in education, health, recreation, and social welfare. Its focus has been almost entirely on the problems of the farm population, with relatively little attention paid to the problems confronting villagers. Other types of rural co-ordinating councils have usually been village centered and have included too few people from the open country and have given inadequate consideration to their problems.

Despite its remarkable achievements, planning must not be regarded as a panacea. It must be remembered that the problems which planning groups have attacked to date have been, by and large, those upon which it was relatively easy to achieve agreement. The more controversial, difficult, and costly tasks of rural social planning lie ahead. There are many aspects of life, furthermore, which are beyond the scope of planning and many basic social and economic maladjustments which cannot be dealt with effectively by local efforts alone. There is little likelihood, for example, that in the immediate future local planning can do a great deal to reduce the disparity which exists between rural and urban areas in wealth, income, and economic burdens. Even when rural people the nation over have mobilized to make the most of their resources through co-operative effort, they will still require help from the states and the nation in order to give their children adequate educational opportunities. Such help is necessary, too, as chapter xvi will make clear, because certain types of action can be undertaken most effectively at the state or federal levels.

The promise of rural planning.—The limitations of planning and the obstacles to successful planning cannot be disregarded, but perhaps the most significant fact which emerges from any survey of the contemporary rural scene is that in literally thousands of communities rural people have shown the ability to surmount those obstacles and to work together for their mutual benefit. Furthermore, in the vast majority of places where planning has been attempted progress is being made toward the attainment of representative planning

organizations and comprehensive programs which neglect no important population element or type of problem. Co-operative agricultural planning committees are already beginning to confer occasionally with townspeople, so that their problems and viewpoints can be given consideration in the planning process. Other types of co-ordinating councils are in many places making special efforts to enlist the participation of more farm people.

If the more difficult tasks of rural planning lie ahead, it is equally true that planning itself is paving the way for the accomplishment of those tasks. Through planning people are establishing patterns and building an organizational structure for successful co-operative action in the future. Even more important, they are acquiring the ability, skill, and self-confidence necessary to tackle progressively more difficult tasks and to build a rural civilization which fulfils their own dreams and desires. Local planning by rural people of America represents one of the most ambitious and promising attempts ever made to give body and substance to democratic ideals.

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CHAPTER XVI

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STATES AND THE NATION

The protection and promotion of the interests of the people who comprise a nation are the sole ends of organized national life. Natural resources, industrial institutions, and all forms of social co-operation are valuable only insofar as they contribute to the welfare of the people.

THIS volume, begun under the shadow of the threat of war, is being finished while the nation is engaged in a world-struggle of unprecedented magnitude. In war the very survival of this country depends upon the intelligence, character, and strength of its entire citizenry. In peace the unity of the entire nation is less apparent but equally real: the well-being of the entire population is affected to some extent by the wisdom and emotional balance of each individual in it. Our nation can never afford to be indifferent to the welfare of any individual or any segment of its population.

The economic interdependence of each group in the population, and particularly of rural and urban people, is now widely recognized. The products of the farm are, of course, essential for the very life of city dwellers, and the prosperity of many urban industries is directly affected by the economic condition of the farm population. It should also be remembered that the foodstuffs and fibers produced on farms constitute the basic raw materials of some of our largest industries. Industries using chiefly the products of the farm represented, in 1929, 30 per cent of all the capital invested in manufacturing and employed a third of all manufacturing wage-earners. In the same year more than 22 per cent of the revenue of Class I railroads came from the transportation of agricultural products, and these products made up a quarter of our export trade.

The nation's interest in rural education.—Although the fact is frequently lost to sight, the nation is a social and cultural, as well as an

economic, unit. Social intelligence—the ability of a people to form sound judgments on public issues—is essential to the very survival of a democratic nation. Unenlightened public policies adopted by the citizens of any locality or any state invariably have their effects upon the national welfare, however indirect, inconspicuous, or delayed those effects may be. Furthermore, people from all parts of the nation must participate jointly in the solution of national issues, which are often of the utmost complexity. The inability of any individual or any group of citizens to understand and assess such issues to some extent jeopardizes the well-being of the entire population.

Urban people must be concerned with the adequacy of educational facilities in rural areas not only because of such considerations but also because it is from rural areas that many of their own citizens come. As was brought out in chapter i, our cities, notably our larger cities, in many instances would not be able to maintain their present population levels if it were not for the cityward movement of rural youth. Migration to urban areas is especially heavy from the open country, largely as a result of the high fertility of the farm population and the technological advances which permit a constantly decreasing percentage of the nation's workers to do its farming. Between 1920 and 1929, it will be remembered, the net migration from farms to cities was 6,300,000. These migrants, the vast majority of them young people between ten and twenty-five years of age, brought with them "their cultural heritage, their knowledge or ignorance, their occupational adaptability or lack of it, and their ability or inability to participate wisely in the determination of social policy." Their capacity to contribute to the economic, social, and political life of the communities in which they will spend their productive, mature years is in part dependent upon educational and other social facilities and upon general environmental conditions in the communities from which they come. As a consequence of the increasing mobility of our population, deficiencies in social facilities which would have been largely local in their effects at an earlier day are now of direct concern to the entire nation.

The nation also has special reason to be concerned with the education of those farm boys and girls who will remain in the country. As was brought out in chapter i, birth rates are markedly higher in rural

than in urban areas. Unless this difference disappears, those young people who remain in the country will have the responsibility of rearing a relatively large proportion of tomorrow's citizens.

Disparities in facilities in city and country.—Manifestly, Americans, wherever they live, have a stake in the welfare of the rural population and the thirteen million children now attending the nation's rural schools. Yet the nation has complacently permitted sharp disparities to develop in the adequacy of educational and social facilities in city and country. Rural schools, for example, fall below urban schools in every comparison subject to statistical measurement. Expenditures per pupil in average daily attendance are markedly lower—in 1935-36, \$67.40 per pupil as compared with \$108.25 per pupil in urban schools—and these lower expenditures reflect themselves in poorly paid and inadequately prepared teachers; in deficiencies in school buildings and equipment; in inaccessibility of schools, particularly at the secondary level; and in shorter school terms. On the average, rural children attend school fewer days each year and tend to drop out of school earlier than urban children. The quality of instruction they receive compares unfavorably with that available in cities in breadth, richness, and adaptation to pupil needs. Excellent work is, of course, being done in some rural schools, as this report has shown, and rural schools have a number of natural educational advantages which some of them are beginning to exploit. The fact remains that the great majority of rural schools are unsatisfactory as compared with urban schools and that conditions in some are almost incredibly bad.

While it is not to be expected in a nation as vast as ours that educational facilities will everywhere be of uniform quality, the existing differences are so pronounced that they deny to the millions of children attending the poorer schools that equality of opportunity which is a prerequisite of the kind of society America is seeking to develop. Deficiencies in educational facilities, furthermore, are paralleled, as has been indicated at many points in this report, by equally serious deficiencies in the provision of other social services which are essential for the welfare of both children and adults.

The inability of rural people to provide adequate facilities.—These deficiencies exist despite the fact that rural people make a greater-

than-average effort to provide essential public services and decent opportunities for their children and despite the fact that in many instances they have displayed great resourcefulness in securing the maximum benefit from what they spend. They exist basically because rural people do not have the economic resources to support the public services required by our present complex civilization. Such services are far more extensive and costly than they were a half-century ago. The public school of the nineteenth century was an institution that taught children the three *R*'s during a few months of the year for a few years. Today the nation's schools are expected to equip students for their future responsibilities as citizens, workers, and parents in a complicated society. The majority of all children attend high school as well as elementary school. This change in the nature of public education has its counterparts in such fields as health, recreation, and welfare. More extensive and costly public services of many kinds are required to meet the exigencies of our modern social, economic, and political order.

Rural people are handicapped in providing such services primarily because of the factors discussed in chapter i: as a group they are markedly disadvantaged financially and they carry a disproportionate share of dependents, old and young. The incomes of farm folk and villagers average far below those of city dwellers, and as a result of imbalances in agricultural and industrial prices, rent and interest payments to residents of cities, and the urban migration of large numbers of rural youth, wealth tends to be drained from rural areas and to become concentrated in the nation's financial and industrial centers. Although agricultural prices are now relatively high, farm people still get a disproportionately small share of the nation's income, and in the recent past the disparity has been pronounced. In 1930, when farm people constituted 25 per cent of the nation's total population, they received only 9 per cent of the total national income. Yet they were responsible for the care and education of 31 per cent of the nation's children. Farm people in the twenty- to sixty-five-year age group must support almost twice as many children five to seventeen years old as urban adults support, and among the rural nonfarm population, too, the ratio of children to adults is higher than in cities.

As a result of the cumulative effect of imbalances in income and number of dependents, the ability of different groups in the population to support education and other public services varies enormously. Considering the nation as a whole, as was brought out in chapter i, \$4.44 of income per child is available in cities for every dollar in farm areas. There are sharp disparities in the relative ability of different states to educate their children, and the disparities among the numerous small local school units within each of the states are in some instances fantastic. In Iowa, for example, the Advisory Committee on Education points out that the most prosperous school district has 275 times the wealth per child of the poorest district. In New York's common-school districts the taxable wealth back of each child varies from \$817 to \$563,000. As was indicated in chapter iii, reorganization of schools into larger local administrative units will significantly reduce the existing differences in taxable wealth, but there is no state where it promises to eliminate them.

In general, throughout the entire nation, the wealthiest school districts are urban, the poorest rural. A recent Arkansas study revealed that the estimated valuation of almost one-third of the state's school districts—almost all of them small rural districts—was less than four hundred dollars per child enrolled. Sixteen of eighteen city districts have an estimated valuation two and a half times as great.

Not only have rural people less money than city dwellers with which to educate their children but they must spend more to offer them equivalent educational advantages. As was brought out in chapter ii, contrary to general belief, education is more expensive in the country than in the city. Because agriculture is so organized in the United States that farm people live on widely scattered farmsteads rather than clustered together in villages, they must choose between small schools, where the per-pupil costs of instruction are high, and schools serving so large an area that transportation for pupils must be provided.

Rural people are also handicapped in providing educational opportunities for their children by the extent to which dependence is still placed on the property tax for the support of schools. When the foundations of America's public school system were being laid, most of the nation's wealth was in real property. Today, except in rural

areas, a large proportion of its wealth is represented by such intangibles as stocks and bonds. Yet real estate still bears the brunt of the support of schools, putting an inequitable burden on the rural population. To alleviate the situation, a number of states, including California, Delaware, North Carolina, Oregon, and Pennsylvania, have eliminated the property tax as a state source of revenue for schools, and in other states the percentage of funds secured from real estate taxes has been substantially reduced. Yet three-fourths of the revenue for the support of public education in the United States is still raised by taxes on real property.

The need for state and federal assistance.—It is clear that rural people need help from the states and the nation if they are to provide those social institutions for themselves and their children which are essential for satisfactory modern living and the perpetuation of a democratic society. The purpose of such outside help, it should be emphasized, is to supplement the efforts of the rural population to solve its problems and to finance the social services it needs. Rural people themselves, as has been maintained throughout this report, must assume primary responsibility for planning the kind of civilization they want and for bringing it into being. The institutions and facilities they establish, develop, and control are more likely to be effective and permanent than those established by outside sources, and they strengthen the fabric of democracy instead of weakening it, as paternalism does. However, no one familiar with the temper of rural Americans can believe that they wish to be relieved of their obligations.

They do, however, need assistance, especially financial assistance, from the states and the nation, and considerations of the utmost importance make it desirable that such assistance should be extended. As has been seen, every American has a stake in the welfare of the rural population. Furthermore, many of the problems which confront rural people cannot be dealt with by local efforts alone; others can be handled more economically and efficiently by a large governmental unit. If numerous cities find it necessary to attract people from farms to maintain their population levels, it is equally essential in many rural areas that urban employment opportunities be available in order to relieve the pressure of population on the land. Mani-

festly the existence of such opportunities depends upon the successful functioning of the entire economy, on the actions of city dwellers as well as those who live in the country, and on the measures taken by the states and the federal government. To take another example, the problems which arise in connection with our present system of migratory farm labor, some of which will be discussed later in this



Farm Security Administration Photographer Rothstein

A POOR RURAL SCHOOL IN A SOUTHEASTERN STATE

chapter, cannot be dealt with adequately by local governments or, in some cases, even by states. The federal government, it is believed, will have to assume an increased share of responsibility in dealing with these problems. Numerous other problems might be mentioned which can be dealt with more strategically by the states or by the nation than by local governmental units. Responsibility for the preparation of teachers, for example, has long been generally accepted by the states.

The states and the nation have not been unmindful of their obligations to their rural populations and have accepted responsibility, at

an increasing tempo in recent years, for helping to improve the conditions of rural life. This volume has reported many things which the several states and the federal government are doing to improve the economic situation of rural people; to meet welfare needs and to minimize insecurity; to provide satisfactory schools and other social institutions; and to meet the needs of special groups in the rural pop-



Farm Security Administration Photographer Marion Post-Wolcott

A MODERN RURAL SCHOOL IN THE SAME STATE

ulation, such as older youth. Much more needs to be done along all these lines, but it is obviously impossible in a report fundamentally concerned with education to suggest a comprehensive program of future action. The close connection of every important phase of such a program with education should, however, be stressed. The improvement of rural health conditions, for example, will spell better educational opportunities for countless rural children. The basic importance of efforts to improve the economic situation of the farm population also deserves special emphasis. It is evident that many of the problems of rural life stem from individual and community

poverty; rural people, and especially farmers, are not getting an economic return in proportion to their contribution to our society. This situation must be corrected.

In the meantime, another generation of rural youth must not be permitted to grow up and enter upon the responsibilities of citizenship, parenthood, and urban and rural vocational life handicapped because of the inadequacy or total lack of youth-serving institutions. This chapter will discuss some of the essential measures which should be taken without delay by the states and the nation to improve educational conditions in rural areas. Many of the measures are already in effect in certain states. It is to be hoped that, in their present or in modified form, they will soon be more generally adopted.

EDUCATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STATES AND THE NATION

If elementary and secondary schools of satisfactory quality are to be provided in rural America, general financial assistance from the states and the nation is the most obviously indicated need. In each of the states the improvement of the least satisfactory schools and progress toward the equalization of educational opportunity depend upon state financial aid—the assumption of responsibility on the part of the entire population for meeting the minimum educational needs of all the state's children. Because there are also sharp differences *among* the states in the ability to support education, federal grants for elementary and secondary education are also necessary. They may be made to serve the same purpose in the nation as a whole which state aid does in some of the individual states: the reduction of existing inequalities of educational opportunity, primarily through the improvement of the weakest schools.

Either in their constitutions or by statutory provision, all states accept the principle that public education is a state responsibility, and it has long been the practice of most states to give some financial assistance to their local school districts. Prior to this century, however, such assistance was offered primarily to secure the acceptance of the idea of free schools and to make them available to all. That objective has been attained. Meanwhile, the cost of education has mounted as school programs have been broadened and lengthened

to meet the demands of a more complex society; and, as has been seen, sharp differences in ability to support education have developed in various localities. Equalization of educational opportunity has become the paramount educational problem of the twentieth century. It is a problem we must solve if we wish to preserve a democratic society. State aid must be adequate and so apportioned as to lessen substantially the undemocratic and dangerous disparities in educational opportunities in different communities.

Wide variations exist in the extent to which the states now contribute to the support of their schools. In 1933-34 four states bore more than 50 per cent of the cost of public education; in twelve other states less than 10 per cent of school costs were covered by state contributions. However, considering the nation as a whole, since 1925 there has been a definite tendency for the states to assume a larger share of the burden of supporting public education, and the tendency has been marked since 1930.

Methods of apportioning state school funds.—Methods of apportioning funds differ widely among the states, but two major trends are in evidence, both of which contribute, in different ways, to the equalization of educational opportunity. A few states attempt to provide enough money to support a uniform minimum program for a given term in all school districts within their boundaries. Even where such funds are distributed to the districts on the basis of the size of their school population or some other measure of their educational load, and without regard to their ability to support education, they contribute to equalization, for they reduce the proportion of the cost of education which must be met by local school units, and thus the proportion affected by differences in local taxpaying ability. Where the state bears a very large part of the cost of supporting education, a considerable degree of equalization is, of course, effected.

Delaware, North Carolina, and West Virginia support their schools almost entirely with state funds. Delaware, which was the first state to assume a large measure of responsibility for school support, adopted its plan in 1921 and has found it necessary to make very few changes in its basic provisions. Each school board annually submits an itemized and detailed budget showing its proposed expenditures for the following year. On the basis of these budgets, the

state board of education makes recommendations to the legislature with regard to the amount which should be appropriated for the support of education. The state itself exercises a considerable degree of supervision over school expenditures, especially in the smaller school districts, where expenditures cannot exceed budget allowances and must be approved by the state board of education before payment is legal. Certain items in local budgets—teachers' salaries, for example—must conform to standards set by the state.

Under Delaware's plan practically the entire cost of a very adequate educational program is borne by the state. In recent years only three or four local school districts have chosen to levy a school tax in order to supplement the state grants. In North Carolina and West Virginia, which have very similar plans, the proportion of the total cost of education covered by state funds is not so large as in Delaware, but in each state it is sufficient to support a uniform, minimum eight-month educational program.

Only a few states bear so large a proportion of the total cost of education as to contribute substantially to the equalization of educational opportunity. However, nearly two-thirds of the states attempt to lessen inequalities by taking account of variations in the ability of local school districts to support education in their method of apportioning some or all of their school funds. Most of the states which follow this policy begin by formulating a statement of what is considered to be an acceptable minimum educational program. For example, a state may determine the minimum length for the school year, establish qualifications for teachers, set minimum salaries for school personnel, and require that provision be made for secondary schools. It then attempts to allocate its school funds in such a way that a uniform tax rate throughout the state will permit each district to provide this minimum approved program; that is, it supplies the difference between the cost of such a program and the yield from a uniform school tax rate. The principle underlying New York's equalization measure, which is one of the best to be found in any state, has been explained as follows:

The foundation underlying the New York system of educational finance is the equalization principle. According to this principle the State shall determine an acceptable minimum standard of educational opportunity below

which no district shall be permitted to go and shall provide a financing system so developed that the burden of support of the minimum program shall fall equally on the people in all communities of the State.

Local school districts which wish to provide a richer educational program than the one made possible by the required tax rate and state aid can, of course, tax themselves more heavily. Indeed, it is important that the required rate be kept low, so that local school districts will be encouraged to make those innovations which are so indispensable to educational progress. Innovations which prove their worth may be expected to spread among other schools and ultimately to become a part of the specified minimum state programs.

There is a wide variation among the states in methods of financing the cost of education, and, within limits, this is altogether desirable. It is not to be expected that any one pattern will meet the diverse needs of the forty-eight states. What is essential is that each state accept responsibility for helping its poorer school districts and equalizing educational opportunities through measures adapted to its own particular situation. Urban and rural citizens alike should participate in the studies which must precede the adoption of suitable measures, and urban citizens should reconcile themselves to the necessity and desirability of contributing to the support of rural schools. Unsatisfactory educational conditions in rural areas will impede the development of many of their own future citizens, and a prolonged and marked disparity between the opportunities available to rural and urban children will undermine our common society.

The need for federal financial assistance.—Generous and equitably distributed state financial assistance can help to equalize educational opportunities within the individual states, but unfortunately there are also sharp differences among the states in their ability to support public schools. Their relative ability to finance education depends directly upon the amount of money which could be raised in each state, per child of school age, by a uniform tax program. Figure 10 shows the sharp variations which exist in selected states in the distribution of dollars and children. As a result of its intensive investigations, the Advisory Committee on Education reports:

About 20 percent of the children of school age in the United States live in States where with no more than average effort [as represented by tax rate under

a model state and local tax system] more than \$75 per child could be provided for education, while another 20 percent live in States where not more than \$25 per child could be provided without more than average effort. An expenditure of \$50 per child would be deemed low in comparison with the typical urban standards of any region, yet more than 60 percent of the children live in States that on a State-wide basis could not provide \$50 per child for public schools without more than average effort.

The situation is portrayed graphically in Figure 11.

Despite the fact that nearly all of the states with relatively low financial ability make a greater-than-average effort to support their

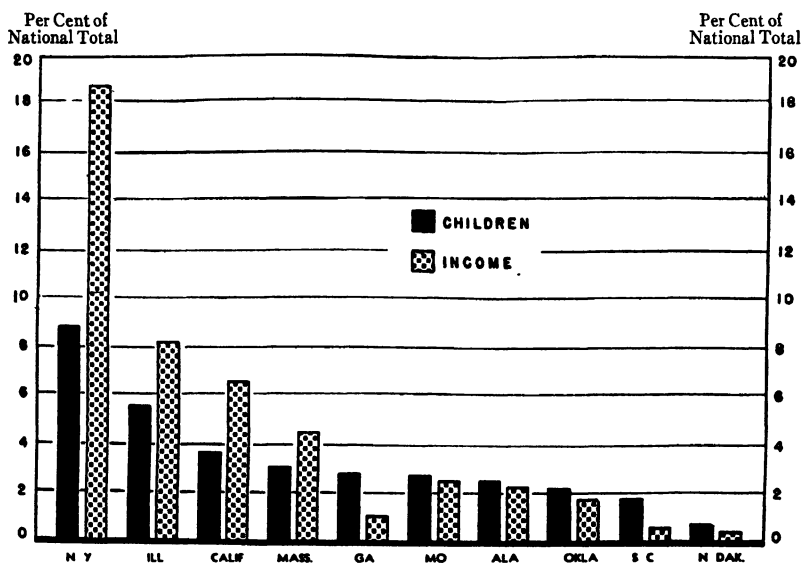


FIG. 10.—Unequal distribution of children relative to income in selected states, 1930

schools, there are wide variations among the states in educational conditions and, as has been brought out in this report, grossly inadequate facilities and programs in certain of the poorer states. The differences in financial ability among the states are too great for their effects to be canceled by the extraordinary efforts of the poorer states to provide satisfactory educational opportunities for their children. It has been estimated that in eight predominantly rural states in the Southeast more than 100 per cent of the revenue available from a model tax program would have had to be devoted to education to raise expenditures per pupil up to the national average.

South Carolina would have had to spend a sum equal to 191 per cent of its revenue to accomplish this result. It is impossible to escape the conclusion of the Advisory Committee on Education that

no sound plan of local or State taxation can be devised and instituted that will support in every local community a school system which meets minimum acceptable standards. Unless the Federal Government participates in the financial support of the schools and related services, several millions of the children in the United States will continue to be largely denied the educational opportunities that should be regarded as their birthright.

The nation as a whole has too important a stake in the welfare of these disadvantaged children, now being denied equality of educational opportunity because of circumstances beyond the control of themselves, their parents, or their communities, to postpone indefinitely the assumption of its responsibility toward them. Migration is no respecter of state boundaries. It is essential to the national welfare, furthermore, that all children be adequately prepared for the obligations and responsibilities of citizenship.

Federal grants for education are by no means unprecedented. Grants of public lands for education antedate the Constitution, and since 1887 the federal government has made money grants to the states for the support of the land-grant colleges. It has furnished funds to the states under the provisions of the Co-operative Agricultural Extension Act since 1914 and under the provisions of the Federal Vocational Education Act since 1917. More recently, many federal agencies have participated in meeting educational needs which arose or became acute during the depression of the thirties. There are thus numerous precedents for the provision of federal funds to facilitate the achievement of educational objectives of nation-wide importance. Manifestly, the equalization of educational opportunity among the states is such an objective.

In efforts to secure such equalization the Advisory Committee on Education has recommended federal participation through general financial assistance for elementary and secondary education and through supplementary grants for the improved preparation of teachers, the construction of school buildings to facilitate reorganization, the administration of state departments of education, adult education, rural library service, and co-operative educational re-

search. Bills embodying the Advisory Committee's recommendations have been introduced into Congress but to date have not been enacted. Difficult problems are involved in determining the proper working relationships between the states and the federal government in the development of education, but neither these difficulties nor any other considerations should be permitted to block the enactment of appropriate legislation. Present conditions, which deny fair opportunities to millions of American children, jeopardize the democratic society for which we are now fighting.

State and federal help with reorganization.—In addition to reducing inequalities of educational opportunity through money grants, the states and the federal government are in a strategic position to promote a number of advances in education which will be of particular benefit to rural schools. A few of the most promising possibilities for state and federal action deserve to be briefly discussed.

For a number of reasons the states, and to a lesser extent the federal government, must play an important role in speeding the attainment of a school organization adequate for the educational task of the mid-twentieth century. The states must assume a large measure of responsibility, for example, in planning reorganizations, both because local school districts, particularly the small, poor ones, which stand to gain most from reorganization, seldom have the resources to conduct the careful studies which are required and because the development of a comprehensive, state-wide plan is necessary to protect the interests of all communities. Reorganization undertaken on a piecemeal basis is frequently characterized by gerrymandering, leading to the formation of inefficient new districts and sometimes leaving small bits of territory indefensibly isolated.

The states and the nation can also expedite—or delay—school reorganization through the kind of fiscal measures they adopt. In a number of states the lack of adequate general financial assistance to local school units has in all probability retarded the progress of reorganization. The people in small, poor districts have shied away from reorganization because they feared they could not support the richer educational program that reorganization makes possible or afford the transportation expenses it generally entails. State grants are in some instances so distributed, furthermore, that they place a

premium on the retention of small and inefficient school districts and make it financially disadvantageous for them to merge. It is evident that the states and the nation can do a great deal to stimulate reorganization through the provision of generous financial assistance for the support of education, the assumption of the cost of pupil transportation, and the adoption of sound plans for distributing their grants.

It is also essential that the states and the nation provide financial assistance in connection with the capital expenditures necessitated by reorganization. The inability of local school administrative units to finance the construction and improvements of school buildings and the purchase of new busses is one of the most important single obstacles to reorganization. There is growing recognition of the desirability of help from both the states and the federal government in connection with such expenditures. The Advisory Committee recommended the establishment of a special federal fund for the construction of school buildings and made it clear that it was to be utilized primarily for the construction made necessary by reorganizations in rural areas.

In most of the states legislative changes also are needed to expedite school reorganization. Many existing state statutes relating to education were designed to strengthen the district system of schools and to meet the educational needs of a day long past. Some of these statutes obstruct and discourage the formation of more efficient school units. These statutes must be repealed, and new laws which authorize and facilitate reorganization must be enacted. In particular, it is necessary to establish simple and democratic reorganization procedures. In a few states procedures for modifying the school organizational structure are so cumbersome that they are seldom used. In some states a reorganization proposal must be approved by two-thirds of the electorate; in others it must be accepted by a majority in every district affected, making it possible for a small and possibly selfish minority to block a change favored by an overwhelming majority of the population. Existing legislation in a number of states permits relatively small villages to form school districts independent of the surrounding farm areas. The organization of such districts removes villages, which would be natural centers for the location of schools, from the sociological communities of which they

are a part, and frequently makes it necessary for farm people to send their children to high school in some district in the determination of whose policies they have no voice.

Establishing machinery for stimulating reorganization.—Faced with the necessity of reducing governmental expenses quickly and dissatisfied with the slow progress of reorganization, in 1933 the West Virginia legislature abolished the district system, made the county the unit of local school administration, and gave the board of education in each county the power to locate schools. The number of school administrative units was reduced at one blow from 398 to 55. There is general agreement among educators, however, that under most circumstances it is more desirable to stimulate reorganization by the type of fiscal and legislative measures which have been described, and, as a final step, by the establishment of machinery for the initiation, consideration, and co-ordination of reorganization proposals.

In Ohio newly created county boards of education and the state department of public instruction have been charged with responsibility for hastening reorganization. In Arkansas it has been proposed that a special division be created in the state department of education to encourage and direct reorganization of school units.

The Regents' Inquiry in New York State has recommended a procedure which will permit the rapid development of well-conceived and well-co-ordinated reorganization plans, by democratic processes and with due deference to variations in local conditions. It is proposed that the legislature create a temporary state commission of five members, which is to have the assistance of a staff of experts. The state commission, in turn, is to appoint eight regional school district committees, each of which is to be composed of representatives of the counties in its area. While the state committee is supposed to suggest desirable standards (for such things as the size of school units) for the guidance of the regional committees, those committees are charged with responsibility for preparing actual reorganization plans. To make certain that the wishes and needs of all communities will be taken into account in the formulation of these plans, regional committees are required to hold local hearings throughout their respective areas.

The plans prepared by the regional committee are to be submitted

to the state commission, which will examine them to see that they fit together properly and, in conference with the regional committees, make such changes as appear necessary to insure a sound, state-wide school structure. The state commissioner of education is then empowered to put the plans into effect, but any community which has an objection to them may file an appeal with the Board of Regents, and no school is to be closed until the voters of the district it was in originally vote to close it. The purpose of the entire proposed procedure has been well stated in the report of the Regents' Inquiry, *Education for American Life*:

The plan of action . . . which has been worked out by the Inquiry is designed to make full use of the democratic process, so that the district boundaries, when drawn, will fit local sentiments, conform to community needs, make possible effective educational administration, result in economical management, and lessen disparities in economic resources of local districts so that true equalization will be brought about.

The states and the improvement of the curriculum.—More generous financial support of rural schools and the attainment of a more efficient school organizational structure are, fundamentally, means to the improvement of educational service. Ultimately, it is to be hoped, local school administrative units throughout rural America will be so strong that they will be able to accept almost complete responsibility for the provision of a rich educational program. Today, however, only a minority of rural administrative units have the resources to prepare, or even make extensive adaptations in, curriculum materials; to stimulate the professional growth of their teachers; and to undertake many of the other functions essential for the provision of a well-rounded and effective instructional program. Recognizing this situation, most of the states are devoting an increasing amount of attention to the improvement of instruction in their rural schools.

There is much in common in what should be taught in rural and urban schools, but at the present time it appears probable that the curriculum of most rural schools is too little adapted to the special needs of their pupils. In the case of the rural high school the curriculum should not be so differentiated from that of the urban school as to prevent its graduates' going to college, but it should take realistic

account of the requirements of that large majority of students for whom secondary education is terminal. At both the elementary and the high-school levels there is need of curriculum material adapted, in content and organization, to the special requirements of rural schools.

Under existing circumstances state departments of education must assume a large measure of responsibility for preparing such material. Yet they must not attempt to determine in detail the curriculum of their individual rural schools, for teachers, if their work is to be spontaneous and effective, must have leeway to adjust instruction to the needs of their particular pupils. Fannie Dunn has admirably indicated a way in which state departments of education can furnish curriculum material and at the same time stimulate rather than inhibit its adaptation to local conditions:

One or more suggestive frameworks might be organized on a statewide basis to fit the general conditions of the schools and communities, taking into account some or all of such factors as the prevailing length of term, entrance age of pupils, labor demands on children, type of school, level of adult education, general health status, and availability of cultural resources. These general patterns might be modified as needed in the several counties. Extensive samples might be presented of possible educational experiences within the various areas of the state, with many suggestions for their development. Guides for community survey might be provided. . . . For teachers deficient in professional training, more specific guides but of the same general type, would be necessary. The ideal curriculum will assure for every teacher all the freedom she can use, yet afford her all the assistance she needs.

It is encouraging to note that a growing number of states are providing rural teachers with curriculum materials which meet the above specifications. In addition, a number of states have prepared excellent instructional material of particular interest to rural pupils. Topics treated include conservation of natural resources, taxation in rural communities, farm tenancy, and conditions and problems of particular regions or states.

Other state approaches to curriculum improvement.—Another promising approach to the problem of developing a better educational program for rural schools is furnished by the work of the Committee on Rural Community High Schools in Wisconsin. As its name suggests, this committee—in whose work the state department of educa-

tion, the University of Wisconsin, several state teacher-education institutions, and a number of local communities are co-operating—is focusing its attention on increasing the effectiveness of the small rural high school. On the basis of several years of preliminary study, a tentative program has been formulated which is to be introduced experimentally for a five-year period in selected high schools at least half of whose enrolment consists actually or potentially of farm youth. One purpose of the project is to develop an educational program which will be more attractive to farm boys and girls, who now attend Wisconsin's high schools in far smaller proportions than urban youth.

In thirty-two states in co-operation with state departments of education, state colleges are preparing correspondence courses and, in some cases, other types of individual instructional material to enable their small high schools to broaden and enrich their offerings. Particularly notable work is being done by the University of Nebraska. It is gratifying to observe the increased interest institutions of higher education are displaying in helping rural communities to solve their educational problems. In the past these institutions, even the land-grant colleges, which have been given federal and state grants primarily to promote the advancement of agriculture and rural life, have devoted too little attention to the problems of rural education. In the period when the land-grant colleges were almost exclusively concerned with the natural sciences, they made important contributions to rural people through research and the development of trained personnel in agriculture. One of the most encouraging results of the emphasis they are now placing on the social sciences is the increasing number of contributions they are making in the field of rural education.

The states and the supervision of teachers.—In addition to helping rural schools to provide a rich and functional curriculum, a number of states are devoting special attention, primarily through the provision of supervision, to the in-service education of rural teachers. Professional supervision is particularly needed in rural areas, where teachers are isolated from one another and, in many cases, face heavy responsibilities with inadequate training and experience. Because many rural school administrative units lack the resources to provide

their teachers with supervisory assistance, pending the achievement of a sound organizational structure a growing number of states are assuming a large measure of responsibility for stimulating the professional growth of rural teachers.

Although practice varies widely among the states which play a prominent role in the provision of supervision, as is desirable in view of their diverse conditions, in general the existing arrangements fall into two groups. A few states, nearly all of which are small or sparsely settled, furnish supervisory help to rural schools through supervisors attached to the staff of the chief state school officer. In another group of states supervisors are paid in whole or in part by the state but are assigned to specific local communities. The states set up definite standards of qualifications which these supervisors must meet and in most instances nominate or even employ them.

Under a number of existing organizational arrangements county superintendents are the logical individuals to supervise rural teachers, but, when they are chosen by popular election, they may not have the professional qualifications and they inevitably lack the security of tenure which in most instances are requisite for effective work. In addition, they may be loaded down with administrative responsibilities. Wisconsin has, therefore, arranged for professionally prepared county supervisors, approved by the state superintendent of public instruction, to be appointed to assist its popularly elected county superintendents. These supervisors have no administrative duties and are free to devote their entire time to working with teachers on problems of instruction.

New Jersey was one of the first states to take steps to strengthen the supervision of its rural schools. Almost a quarter of a century ago the state began to employ well-trained and experienced women to help its rural elementary-school teachers, who were, for the most part, young, inexperienced, and inadequately prepared for their work. Such helping-teachers are still employed—in a recent year there were fifty-four of them, each of whom supervised the work of approximately thirty-seven teachers—and their essential role remains unchanged. They are demonstration teachers and guides rather than inspectors; they constitute “a sort of traveling Normal School educating teachers while on the job.” Instead of attempting

to enforce a rigid standardization, they take each teacher where she is and attempt to stimulate and encourage her and to help her with her individual problems. They show teachers how to utilize environmental resources in the social studies and elementary science and help them to develop an effective reading program. In addition, they assist teachers in such diverse tasks as securing needed, suitable school equipment and instructional material; in improving school libraries; and in developing more satisfactory report cards. Charles H. Elliott, state commissioner of education, credits helping-teachers with making a significant contribution to the achievement of an improved program of elementary education in New Jersey.

Other state efforts to improve rural education.—In numerous ways besides those which it has been possible to describe in this chapter, the states, primarily through their departments of public education, are interesting themselves in the improvement of rural educational conditions. As was brought out in chapter vii, many of the states are attempting to obtain better teachers for their rural schools through such devices as raising certification requirements, adopting better selection procedures, and establishing state-wide minimum salary schedules. Certain states are interesting themselves in the in-service education of school superintendents and locally employed supervisors as well as in the professional growth of teachers in service. A number of states are providing material assistance to their rural school districts in the education of exceptional and handicapped children.

Co-operation with local school units generally and research in problems of rural education are both on the increase. In addition to reporting such research, a number of state departments of education issue journals or occasional publications which describe outstanding innovations in the schools of their states, thus stimulating the widespread adoption of desirable new practices. While state departments of education generally must do far more than they are now doing to help their poorer rural schools to provide an adequate educational program, there are solid grounds for encouragement in the trend of development in recent years. The United States Office of Education, too, in co-operation with the states and with local school units, is contributing more actively to the solution of rural education problems through research, conferences, and demonstrations.

On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that if millions of rural children are not to be deprived of reasonable equality of educational opportunity, the states and the nation must furnish many types of help in addition to those which have been discussed here. In many states, for example, the length of the school year and the span of compulsory attendance need to be increased and school attendance laws need to be strengthened. In connection with library service, health, welfare, and every phase of rural life discussed in this report, it is essential that the states and the nation assume a larger measure of responsibility, through financial assistance and other means, for reducing the sharp and dangerous disparities between conditions and facilities in city and country. They must accept more responsibility, too, in connection with certain problems which cut across local and even state boundaries, such as the problem of migratory farm labor, some aspects of which will now be briefly discussed.

THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN IN MIGRANT FARM FAMILIES

Beginning as much as fifty years ago there were numbers of farm laborers who moved through the wheat belt of the Middle West and the Great Plains. There were probably as many as a quarter of a million of them when the movement was at its height. These workers were mainly unmarried men who worked "in the woods" in the winter, "on the drive" in the spring, and in the wheat fields during the summer months. They would begin their summer work with the start of harvests and travel northward on foot and on freight trains as the harvest season moved north. They spent their time between working spells in such centers as Chicago, Duluth, and the Twin Cities. Those who married, for the most part, had their families in these centers. Many of these workers were on their way to becoming farmers.

The migrant farm laborer of today is in a very different situation from his predecessor who moved with the wheat harvest. The present migrants are largely young married men. They travel with their families, each of which typically consists of two adults and a child, and take all their earthly possessions with them as they move from place to place, usually in a broken-down "jalopy," in search of

work. The incomes of migrant farm families range between \$200 and \$450 a year; their living standards are among the lowest of any group in the United States. Instead of being on their way to farm-ownership, the overwhelming majority of the migrant workers of today are without security or prospects. Thousands of these workers are former owners or tenants who have been crowded out by the mechanization of agriculture. In certain sections of the country, notably in the Southwest, small farms operated by tenants and mules are being rapidly displaced by large farms operated by seasonal laborers and tractors. In Texas alone the number of tractors increased from nine thousand to ninety-nine thousand between 1920 and 1937, and it is estimated that each tractor displaces from one to five tenant families.

The number of migrant farm laborers has increased rapidly. It is estimated that there are now 350,000 families—more than a million men, women, and children—desperately endeavoring to earn a living by following the crops.

While the services of migrant farm laborers are used most extensively in the specialty-crop regions of California, as agriculture is now organized they are required also in the Pacific Northwest, in the beet and potato regions of Idaho, Oregon, Washington, and Colorado, and in parts of Arizona, Florida, New Jersey, and Texas. It has been estimated that in Texas alone there are nearly half a million migratory workers, most of whom are employed in picking cotton. These cotton-pickers follow the opening bolls from one end of the state to the other, and, though their services are seldom required in any given place for more than from six to ten weeks, if they are fortunate they may get nearly six months of employment.

Living and health conditions among migrants.—The conditions under which many migratory farm families live, as *The Grapes of Wrath* helped the American public to realize, are a reproach to the nation. Some big farms furnish adequate living quarters for their seasonal workers, and the Farm Security Administration has established camps which, in the course of a year, accommodate between thirty-five thousand and forty thousand families. But the vast majority of migrant families are put in deserted chicken houses or barns or in crude, crowded barracks for which they may have to

pay rental; or they are forced to pitch their tents in crowded, make-shift camps, "on the roadside, on ditch banks, or in vacant lots on the outskirts of small towns." Their shelters afford little protection from the weather and seldom have proper facilities for washing, bathing, and cooking. Sanitary facilities are almost always totally inadequate.

Living under such circumstances, compelled to depend upon small and precarious earnings, handicapped by lack of familiarity with community health resources and lack of residence status by which eligibility for public assistance is usually established, migrant farm families, as is to be expected, suffer from more than their share of malnourishment and disease. A third of the children of a group of seasonal workers recently studied in California were found to be malnourished. Large numbers suffered from communicable diseases. Nor do the conditions under which migrant children live leave their mark in terms of physical ill-health alone:

Perhaps the most serious disturbing factor for the children is the lack of security which comes with the absence of a settled family life and of regular school experience. The necessity for continuous readjustment to new conditions, to changing family situations, to the ups and downs and the endless shifting of family fortunes, carries with it repeated threats to a child's sense of security and to his mental and social development. The integration of family life with that of a community gives to the children the sense of belonging and the incentives that make for normal mental life. This is all lacking for children of the migrants.

Efforts of many sorts are under way to improve the situation of migratory farm families. In the area of education, for example, some California communities have established special schools for the children of migratory workers, and in many instances the state has sent equipment and teachers to these communities. Although the Farm Security Administration regards the education of school-age children in migratory families as a responsibility of local communities, since the families are there as a result of communities' seasonal labor requirements, recognizing that the construction of a migratory labor camp tends to concentrate workers in a given locality, it has co-operated with local boards of education in a variety of ways.

The provision by the Farm Security Administration of camps

which furnish decent living accommodations for from thirty-five thousand to forty thousand families annually has already been mentioned. These camps are of two types: permanent and mobile. Most F.S.A. camps have a children's clinic and an isolation ward for people with contagious diseases. A number of camps have child welfare committees through which those in residence are given instruction in child care, and at some camps general adult-education programs and recreational programs with an educational emphasis are in progress. In 1938 the F.S.A. financed and helped to organize an association to provide medical care for destitute migrant families in California and Arizona. Through its rehabilitation and tenancy purchase programs, it has attempted to stop unnecessary migration at its source, and it has established several homestead projects in an effort to get some migrants permanently settled.

The educational status of migrant children.—While many of the efforts of the F.S.A., some of the states, and certain communities to relieve the situation of migrant farm families hold real promise, the sum total of what is being done is woefully inadequate in relation to the need. The problems which arise in connection with the temporary presence of vast numbers of migrant farm families in small rural communities do not admit of easy solution. For example, there are great difficulties involved in protecting migrant children from exploitation and providing them with satisfactory educational opportunities. Strong state child labor and school attendance laws are obviously needed. The Sixth National Conference on Labor Legislation and the 1940 White House Conference on Children in a Democracy both recommended the enactment of state laws forbidding the employment in industrialized agriculture of children under fourteen and, during school hours, of children under sixteen. If such laws are to be enforced, however, and if adequate school facilities are to be provided for migrant children, public understanding of their situation and needs must be developed. As Helen Heffernan writes:

If the facts are to be faced realistically, we must admit that there is frequently discrimination against migratory children. Such children and their parents are wanted only as a solution to a labor problem. They are not considered an integral part of the community life; the children are not wanted in the regular schools because of considerations of cleanliness, health or social status;

and some socially myopic adults who would decry long hours of labor as barbarous for their own children, actually advocate labor rather than education for the migratory child.

Even when communities recognize their responsibilities to the migrant children in their midst, they frequently lack the resources to fulfil them. Many special problems arise in connection with the education of migrant children, the most notable of which are due to their short residence in any given place, their special health needs, and the difference between their background and that of the children who reside permanently in a particular community. Migrant children, furthermore, are frequently present in such large numbers that their education would strain the resources of all but the wealthiest local school units. In Kern County, California, the number of children received by transfer (due largely to the migration of farm laborers) numbered more than seventeen thousand in the 1937-38 school year.

As one would expect, in view of the conditions under which they live and the inability or unwillingness of many communities to provide adequate facilities for them, migrant farm children are one of the most underprivileged groups educationally in the nation. Studies made in various parts of the country show that school attendance among migrant children is highly irregular and that for long periods many of them are not enrolled in school at all. Inevitably, their meager educational opportunities and their environmental handicaps impede their school progress. Studies made on both sides of the continent—in California and New Jersey—indicate that a large proportion of migrant children are seriously retarded in their work at school.

The need for state and federal action.—Obviously, the problem of providing better educational opportunities for migrant children cannot be attacked in isolation. The success of such efforts depends in a measure upon the progress which is made in improving the social and economic position of migrant farm families. Children cannot be expected to obtain maximum benefit from their education when they are out of school a large part of the time and when they attend school hungry, ill, and insecure.

While solutions are sought, however, to the basic problems which arise in connection with our use of migrant farm labor, the states and

the nation must simultaneously attempt to see that migrant children are not denied the equality of educational opportunity which should be their birthright. Local communities cannot, without assistance, make adequate provision for the education of these children, and many of the problems involved in educating them call for state and federal activity. Their stake in the future of these children, furthermore, compels the states and the nation to assume a large measure of responsibility in connection with their education. "The migrant child of today [may] become a serious liability to the country tomorrow as cheap labor, as a poorly educated citizen, as an abnormal, unsocial, and unhappy human being." The states and the nation should extend themselves now to meet the educational needs of underprivileged migrant children. Among the steps which might be considered are the following:

1. The feasibility of taxing the crops which are primarily dependent on migratory workers in order to secure funds with which to raise their standard of living. Some of the funds so raised should be devoted to the education of children.
2. Grants of federal funds to those states in which the numbers of migratory laborers are large enough so that special problems arise in providing schools for their children.
3. The possibility of developing mobile school units, perhaps in conjunction with F.S.A. mobile camps, for those areas in which migratory workers are most numerous.

CO-ORDINATION AT THE STATE AND FEDERAL LEVELS

If the efforts of the states and the nation to fulfil their responsibilities to their rural populations are to yield maximum results, it is essential that those efforts be well co-ordinated. The last quarter-century has witnessed the creation of many agencies designed to contribute to the improvement of rural life. Unfortunately, however, in too many instances each of these agencies has gone its own way, with little or no endeavor to dovetail its work with that of agencies whose objectives and functions are closely related to its own. Indeed, in some instances, agencies concerned with essentially the same problems have been competitive and have worked at cross-purposes. Wasteful competitiveness on the part of public agencies,

or even unco-ordinated activity, is particularly inexcusable in rural areas, where the total resources available are seldom adequate in relation to needs. The efforts being made at the local level to eliminate unco-ordinated activity have been described in chapter xv. At the state and federal levels it is equally essential to co-ordinate and give central direction to the work of the various agencies serving rural America, but little concern has been shown in achieving interagency co-operation until recent years.

The importance of co-ordinating the work being done by the Co-operative Agricultural Extension Service and the teachers of vocational agriculture and home economics in the public school system has been stressed at various points in this report. Yet, until recently, in too many states there has been little or no effort exerted to achieve such co-ordination. Georgia is one of a number of states which are now seriously facing the problems involved in developing good working relationships between these two essential services. Each year a joint meeting is held of the state extension staff and the state vocational education staff:

Attention is focused on the needs of the state and the individual communities, and the ways the two services can co-operate in meeting them. Where there is duplication of function and the possibility of friction, the issue is thrashed out and a definite agreement reached.

In a number of other states similar developments are in progress, and in one or two cases they have even led to some exchange of personnel.

Numerous additional examples of interagency co-operation at the state level might be cited. In North Carolina the representatives of more than a score of organizations concerned with the welfare of youth have organized a council of youth-serving agencies. In addition to exchanging information and planning programs co-operatively, the council conducts surveys on youth conditions and does what it can to stimulate public sentiment for the support of more adequate programs for youth. North Carolina has also organized a state council of social agencies. In 1936 South Dakota set up a state nutrition committee, which stimulated the organization of a number of county committees. Before the advent of co-operative agricultural planning, North Dakota had a number of community councils,

which typically included representatives of agricultural agencies and agencies concerned with welfare. The minutes of the meetings of these councils were forwarded to a state co-ordinator, an employee of the Office of Government Reports, who called the attention of state and federal agencies to those problems upon which they were in a position to act.

In Tennessee notable progress has been made in stimulating community organization for health education through the co-operative efforts of the University of Tennessee, the state health department, the Commonwealth Fund, the state department of education, state teacher-training institutions, and the Tennessee Valley Authority. The planning committee representing these agencies functions through an executive secretary and field representative known as the state health education co-ordinator. As an employee of all the co-operating agencies, he concerns himself with their interrelationships and serves as a liaison officer between the state planning committee and such local officials as county school superintendents and health officers. Tennessee's co-operative health project has stimulated better community planning to meet health needs in a number of counties, in some of which co-ordinators have been appointed, who, at the local level, represent both the public health department and the schools. In addition, it has influenced teacher-preparatory institutions to place increased emphasis on health education and has stimulated the preparation of a considerable amount of curriculum and instructional material for the use of teachers now in service. Co-operative health projects very similar to Tennessee's have been instituted in North Carolina and Oregon.

Co-ordination at the federal level.—At the federal level, too, there appears to be a growing realization of the importance of developing closer working relationships among the agencies serving rural areas. A joint committee on relationships in agriculture and homemaking education has been established. It has made recommendations for closer co-operation between the Extension Service and school vocational education programs in connection with the co-ordination of their educational work, the preparation of subject-matter material, and the training of the personnel of the two services.

In connection with the defense effort a number of programs have

been launched which require the co-operation of a far larger number of government agencies. For example, under the auspices of the Labor Division of the Office of Production Management a dozen agencies have co-operated in a nation-wide program to prepare workers for defense jobs. Over a million individuals were given training during the first year this program was in operation.

Co-ordination is necessary not only *at* each level—local, state, and federal—but *between* levels. No undertaking holds more promise of fostering co-operation both at and between various governmental levels than co-operative agricultural planning, discussed in chapter xv. It provides the machinery through which all agencies interested in the improvement of rural life may co-ordinate their efforts; it permits these agencies, whether they are local, state, or federal, to come in vital contact with the people they are expected to serve; and it gives the rural people themselves a better opportunity to make their voices heard in the formulation of governmental policy.

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